Gathering at The Travel Goods Show is like the first day of the school year. You’re back among familiar friends, after a summer away. Everyone has new stories to tell, new items to show off. But there are also interesting newcomers to the schoolyard. Their personalities, and what they bring to the playground, can inject new life and bring new changes.

The Show’s first-time exhibitors are the industry’s new faces. And they’re definitely bringing some energy to NOLA, with fresh takes on travel gear and, in some instances, newly invented product categories to help people as they venture forth, on travel days and every day.

These are the brands that will inspire change, infusing the industry with ideas and energy that could influence future direction for us all.

Note: This story was written from materials submitted by the companies themselves, in response to an email that went out to all new exhibitors asking for info. There are over 60 new exhibitors at this year’s Show. Be sure to visit all of them.

AeroPress (Booth P13)

Fresh-brewed Coffee. Wherever, Whenever.

Among coffee die-hards, AeroPress inventor Alan Adler is a celebrated hero. And if you’ve ever been left disappointed after prowling an unfamiliar city in search of good coffee, he should be your hero too.

The original AeroPress, which Adler invented in 2005, is extraordinarily popular with coffee aficionados. A forum subject devoted to it is the single most popular thread on CoffeeGeek.com, the world’s largest coffee website, with more than 97,000 members and 10,000+ forum pages. The AeroPress world championships is an event that’s followed enthusiastically online, with hundreds of web pages devoted to individual secrets and brewing methods. Last year 68 AeroPress aficionados battled to become national champions, and the right to compete at the 12th world championships in London.

AeroPress coffee is quicker and smoother than pour-over, cleaner and less bitter than French press, without the bottom-of-the-cup mud. It’s eminently more portable than other methods, letting you brew up java anywhere you can boil water, with typical extraction taking place in about a minute.

ON SHOW: The new AeroPress Go is a riff on the original AeroPress, optimized for travel with all parts nesting to fit inside its own 5.3” x 3.9” travel mug. Its rapid, total immersion brewing process provides a clean extraction for amazingly delicious, rich, smooth coffee. Brewing up American-style coffee, espresso, even cold brew takes only about a minute, and without the bitterness and acidity of other methods. It combines the simplicity of French press brewing with the clean, grit-free coffee typical of paper filter methods, and is practically self-cleaning. MSRP: $36.99

DSK Brands (Booth 847)
Bringing Eco-friendly, Recyclable Luggage to the World

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erhouse, well known in Europe, Asia and Oceania, declaring itself the world’s largest manufacturer, designer and retailer of “first-class luggage.” It’s represented in the U.S. by DSK Brands.

At The Travel Goods Show Eminent will introduce TPO, thermoplastic olefin, to the luggage market. Touted for being eco-friendly, recyclable, UV resistant, lightweight and durable, TPO’s qualities are ideally suited for hardshell luggage and are an Eminent exclusive in this application.

ON SHOW: Eminent’s TPO Series luggage is the first use of eco-friendly, recyclable thermoplastic olefin (TPO) in hardshell luggage. The 100% recyclable material is UV resistant and durable, resulting in a sturdy, lightweight suitcase that’s feature laden and eco-friendly. The 26” x 18” x 10” version comes with a $149.99 MSRP.

Hillside Industries (Booth 138)
The Next Generation of Personal Portability

When it comes to business casual, you’re usually faced with two choices for schlepping stuff between work and home: backpack or messenger bag. Hillside Industries introduces a clever solution that doesn’t force you to choose, with its Bagpack that transitions, in seconds, between over-the-shoulder carry and backpack mode.

The patented design uses clever strap routing that lets it be slung horizontally by a single strap, or vertically from a pair of shoulder straps. It’s a beautiful concept, transitioning between carry modes in seconds without the need to fiddle with buckles and zippers. You don’t even need to set the bag down to switch modes, making the transition as smooth as it hangs from one shoulder.

Bagpacks are available in a variety of sizes, in nylon and leather, with some incorporating TSA-friendly laptop pockets for the jet set.

ON SHOW: Hillside’s patented Bagpacks present a low-profile silhouette appropriate for urban carry, making them extremely handy for crowded public transit, and quickly convert between messenger bag and backpack carrying modes.

The flagship Meridian V2.0 in vegetable tanned leather, with all metal hardware, includes a TSA-friendly laptop compartment and retails at $275 MSRP.

Icon Luxury Group (Booth 633)
Launching a New Level of Luxury Luggage

Icon Luxury Group’s portfolio of high-end brands is mind-blowing in its depth and scope, with more than 50 household names, from Armani to Zegna. It’s a luxury purveyor of dress shirts, active wear and luggage, with a retail network stretching across the U.S., Europe and Asia. Icon is a distributor and manufacturer, but also specializes in luxury closeouts, with exclusive arrangements with some of the world’s biggest luxury brands.

The company’s newly minted luggage division launched last fall with a number of brands, but it’s no newbie, being helmed by personalities bringing more than 25 years of experience in luggage design and sales. Its three core luggage names include Rebecca Minkoff (MSRP $400-$600), Aquascutum (MSRP $600-

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ON SHOW: Luxury rollers from Roberto Cavalli, with recessed trolley handle, 100% polycarbonate shells and 2” of expansion room. Plus a plethora of additional styles and brands.

ON SHOW: The Punch 3-Piece Luggage Set with USB port features polycarbonate/ABS construction in a shock- absorbent design with built-in lock, coil zippers and retractable push-button handles. Available as a set of 20” carry-on, 24” and 28” 4-wheel rollers. The 20” carry-on includes a USB pass-through, permitting access to an internal power bank (not included). MSRP: $199.99

ON SHOW: The My Cruiser - EZ Pack luggage system, ABS hardside rolling cases with built-in organization compartments, including dedicated space for four or more pairs of shoes (depending on suitcase size), plus a removable hanging panel with toiletries and laundry pockets that can be suspended in a closet or bathroom. In 22”, 24” and 28” sizes, or a 3-piece set, all with TSA-accepted combo locks. MSRP: $109 (22”), $119 (24”), $139 (28”), $289 (3-piece set)

paq bags carry-ons are chock full of innovative elements, from the patented rotating buckles that enable them to be carried as backpack or shoulder slung duffle, to hidden internal compression straps and the pivoting, detachable waist belt. Urban-sleek design and rugged, weatherized features make them able companions for outdoorsy adventures.

paq bags (Booth P10)
It Began with a Buckle...
The idea for paq bags came in 2011, when architecture student Matthew Jensen invented a snap-together, rotating buckle that enabled a new bag design with more comfort and functionality. The unique buckle – first tested as a 3D-printed model in late 2011 – permits the bag’s straps to be configured for an extremely comfortable carry as a
backpack or cross-body duffle, with the straps free to rotate at their attachment points.

This is good, function-driven design, and there’s more innovation to paq bags than the patented buckle. Internal compression straps help the bag cinch down, accordion style, to keep things in place and maintain a more carry-friendly silhouette. A rotating buckle anchors the waist strap, permitting it to pivot for comfort, and to be removable. TPU-backed polyester and rubberized YKK AquaGuard zippers provide weather protection, while leather handles and external lash/compression straps provide added utility.

ON SHOW: Carry-on bags are paq bags’ signature product, with its patented rotating buckle that enable the straps to be configured for backpack-style carry, or joined together for a duffle-style shoulder sling. The two available versions – 30 and 40 liters – are both carry-on size, the principal difference being the 15- and 17-inch laptop compartments. MSRP: $300

Raido Luggage (Booth P3)

Good Fortune and Protection for Travelers. And Pets!

Raido – with offices in Florence, Italy and Miami, USA – might be a new launch, but takes its name from the ancient Etruscan alphabet, Raido being the rune for travel, which bestows good fortune and protection on travelers.

Raido’s Numero Uno Collection consists of 21”, 25” and 30” ABS expandable hardsides designed in Italy, priced from $79 to $99 MSRP, that are compatible with its unique Raido Pet Carrier.

ON SHOW: The Raido Numero Uno Collection of hardside luggage, plus the Raido Pet Carrier, a hybrid carrier with removable wheels. The carrier’s patent pending connectors permit it to be joined to the 21” carry-on trolley case like a tiny caboose, simplifying navigation through concourses and terminals for people and their animal companions. MSRP: $69.95 (pet carrier), $139.95 (20” cabin trolley + pet carrier)

PORTINEER (Booth P15)

Engineered to Move Your Gear

“Engineered to move your gear” might sound like a hefty slogan for a company whose singular product is a travel soap case, but don’t be fooled. While Portineer might be off to a modest start, it has big plans ahead.

The foundation for Portineer’s ambitious future is its P1 connector, under development since 2016. Think of it as a slide-together connector for MOLLE gear, which will enable its travel bag lineup – anticipated to include a gym bag, daypack, toiletries kit, garment bag and soft brief – to be compatible with a host of add-on accessories.

ON SHOW: The Carry-Dri Travel Soap Case uses labyrinth-like air channels to permit moisture to evaporate, without actual liquid leakage from its ABS plastic, silicone-sealed clamshell. MSRP: $9.95

RAINRAPS (Booth P8)

Smart & Stylish Rainy Day Fashion

Stylish and comfy, RAINRAPS may have you actually wishing for rainy days. Their lightweight, quick-drying design and reversible colorways make them ideal for travel, not just for wet-weather outings but as an easy way to diversify your travel wardrobe with minimal bulk and heft.

Tired of frumpy, bulky rainwear, RAINRAPS founder Stacy Struminger was inspired to create a water repellent wrap as a stylish alternative.

That original RAINRAP has since spawned a number of spinoffs, including the insulated WINTERRAPS with flannel-like lining; SPORTYRAPS with zip-front and snap-together “sleeves”; and SPIRITRAPS, featuring team-inspired colors and longer tails for sta-

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SpectraSpray’s travel lifestyle kits – including Jet Lag, Stay Well and Travel Well – help your body cope with the stress of travel by assisting and enhancing sleep, immunity and energy, while reducing stress. MSRP: $18.95 (spray), $53.95 (kit)

The future of vitamins is here, in the form of oral sprays that provide superior absorption with all-natural ingredients. “We have found a substantial need to support travelers worldwide with disabling jet lag issues and wellness challenges,” said SpectraSpray founder Janet Ryan. “Our innovative formulas for sleep support, immune support, stress support and energy support create a well-rounded solution to the challenges of travel.”

ON SHOW: Oral spray vitamins with micro emulsion technology are readily absorbed, without need for physiological processing or digestion. They’re easier to administer than pills, capsules or liquids, with the added convenience of not requiring water or food for proper absorption – and can provide up to five times higher intake than traditional delivery methods.

Versillo – a portmanteau of versatile and pillow – is the brainchild of EvanMarie Brasington, an 11-year-old fifth-grader from South Carolina who had an idea for a better travel pillow. “It is more comfortable to lie on, stores easily on your luggage, props your electronic device, supports your back and bottom and so much more!”

Her unique design, loosely formed like a capital letter E, is an interesting departure from the typical U- or C-shape. That middle segment is key to the pillow’s versatility: Fold it up to create extra support behind the head, or turn the whole pillow to the side for extra lateral head support.

With the middle segment folded down the Versillo is functionally shaped like a small rectangular pillow, which lends itself to use as additional lumbar support, or as a seat bottom cushion when you need a little extra padding. It’s a very different shape, and the kidentrepreneur has already secured a patent in China, with patents pending elsewhere, and offers more use options than typical C- or U-shape travel pillows.

ON SHOW: The Versillo, the more versatile travel pillow with a unique shape that provides extra support where you need it – behind the head or to the side. MSRP: $19.95