



# nes to Watch

By Garrett Lai

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

Fresh-brewed coffee, to go! The ultra-portable AeroPress Go lets you travel as your own barista, and brew up incredible java anywhere boiled water is available. GQ calls it "the travel-friendly coffee maker of our dreams," and *Wired* labeled it "our new favorite travel coffee maker."



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



European design influence, modern styling and its exclusive, 100% recyclable TPO hardshell sets Eminent's TPO Series apart from the crowd with forward-looking materials in a contemporary silhouette.

Eminent originates in Taiwan, where it was founded as Wanguo Suitcase Co., Ltd., in 1979. In the 40 years since, the company has grown from a small manufacturer into a global pow-

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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 Backpack 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.

Backpacks 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 Backpacks present a low-profile silhouette appropriate for urban carry, making them extremely handy for crowded public transit, and quickly



Why not have both? Hillside Industries solves the age-old dilemma of having to choose between a messenger bag or backpack with its patented Backpacks, shoulder-slung carry-alls. At the top of the heap is the Meridian V2.0 Leather Backpack, in vegetable tanned leather with 2-inch seatbelt webbing, metal hardware and TSA-friendly laptop compartment.

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.



Slither into style with this python case from Rebecca Minkoff's Pippa Collection. The hardside features eye-catching graphics and an ABS + polycarbonate film hardshell, with interior organizer pockets and a recessed, locking trolley handle with top and side handles. Available in black, red or taupe (shown). MSRP: \$325 (20"), \$375 (24"), \$450 (28")

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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\$800) and Roberto Cavalli (MSRP \$825-\$1,050).

**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.

**Mirage Luggage** (Booth 339)  
**Passion, Innovation and Drive – Since 2018**

Family-owned, family-run **Mirage Luggage** might be a relative newcomer, having been established in 2018, but it's not slow out of the gate. By its own account, the company produces more than 1.5 million products per year, with distribution to more than six countries. It's an impressive accomplishment, especially since it's an entirely self-financed operation.

"We're a family business built on family principles," declares Avi Jajati, sales director for luggage and accessories. The family's strong background in the fashion and garment sectors allows it to stay ahead of emerging trends, providing inroads with high-end department stores and helping build a robust private label business. It's a successful formula.



Molded polycarbonate/ABS construction allows Punch to have this whimsically relaxed silhouette, without compromising hardside protection. The 3-piece set includes 28" and 24" checked pieces, with a 20" carry-on that includes a USB pass-through for external access to a user-supplied power bank inside.

**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

**My Cruiser - EZ Pack** (Booth P16)  
**Taking Luggage Organization Beyond the Cube**



My Cruiser - EZ Pack dispenses with packing cubes with built-in organizers for its hardside rollers, including a removable panel with closet hook featuring toiletry and laundry compartments. A dedicated compartment accommodates at least four pairs of shoes, while integrated dividers and straps keep things secure in transit – and upon arrival.

**My Cruiser™ - EZ Pack** is more than a suitcase; think of it as a luggage system, with built-in

compartments that obviate the need for add-on packing cubes. It's a smartly designed concept, and even includes a removable, pocketed panel intended for toiletries and laundry that can be easily hung up in a bathroom or closet.

**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** (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

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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 duffel, 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.



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backpack or cross-body duffel, 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 duffel-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

**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



Just say no to mushy soap! The Carry-Dri Travel Soap Case's innovative hardshell case permits soap to dry without water leaking out. Soap lasts longer, without imperiling the rest of your luggage contents with soap slime.

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

**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



All aboard! Raido's unique Pet Travel System connects the wheeled pet carrier to the carry-on suitcase for smoother transit through terminals, hotel lobbies and the like.



consists of 21", 25" and 30" ABS expandable hardshells 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 hardshell 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)

**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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dium-style seating at sports venues or anyplace you might desire additional weatherproof coverage.

**ON SHOW:** RAINRAPs, water-repellent, fast-drying and stylish alternatives to bulky, conventional women's rain-wear. RAINRAPs are one size fits most, providing rain protection from neckline to mid-thigh. They're lightweight and reversible, with hidden magnetic closure and matching travel pouch. MSRP: \$65

**Sasha Handbags** (Booth 120)  
**A Design Family Devoted to Value, with Flair**

Sasha was founded in 1980 by a small group of like-minded designers, and in the 40 years since it's grown into a family of creators, innovators and collaborators dedicated to leading the charge in women's accessory design. Its motto is simple: Create value.

Sasha's fashion sense is informed by its global footprint, with a New York showroom and design space and offices in Hong Kong and China. The company designs and produces a variety of women's accessories ranging from handbags to wallets, shoes, hats



Step out in style with the Beverly Hills Polo Club Iconic Logo 3PC Luggage Set, featuring spinner wheels, BHPC signature print lining and an expandable design. In assorted fashion-forward colors. MSRP: \$300

and cosmetics cases, with a stable of brands that include Aeropostale, Baby Phat, Betty Boop, Gloria Vanderbilt and Marilyn Monroe, among others. Its luggage offerings include hardsides and soft luggage, weekenders, duffels, backpacks, messenger bags, fanny packs and wallets.

**ON SHOW:** Everyday bags, personal accessories and luggage from multiple fashion brands, including Sasha's own house brands – Stephanie Nicole and Cee Klein.

**SpectraSpray Global** (Booth 335)  
**Supplementary Support for Travelers on the Run**



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** (Booth P4)  
**Versillo Is the More Versatile Pillow**



Fifth grader EvanMarie Brasington invented the Versillo, a more versatile pillow for travel. The unique shape is already patented in China, with patents pending elsewhere, and offers more use options than typical C- or U-shape travel pillows.

**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 kidpreneur has already secured a patent in China, with patents pending in the U.S. and Europe.

**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