



## **GODIVA Appoints Nurtac Ziyal Afridi as CEO, Marking New Era of Growth and Accessibility for Iconic Brand**

NEW YORK – (Dec. 17, 2020) - GODIVA, the global leader in premium chocolate owned by Yildiz Holding, today named Nurtac Ziyal Afridi as CEO. The announcement caps her two months serving as interim chief executive officer in which she and her leadership team developed a three-year strategy to seize new opportunities through GODIVA’s dynamic omnichannel structure.

Afridi, a GODIVA board member as well as Yildiz Holding's chief strategy and growth officer, said she will work with her teams to continue making the company’s popular chocolates and chocolate-inspired products accessible by extending its channels, which include online and FDM (food drug mass), to reach new consumers and engage with loyal consumers in new ways.

Her appointment comes as GODIVA has sought to bring the company’s chocolate to a wider audience and adjusted its business operations in line with changes in shoppers’ behavior. Year to date, the company has seen significant growth in its consumer base, driven largely by Godiva.com and FDM sales.

“Afridi brings an impressive combination of business, operational and finance expertise to GODIVA along with a strong passion for people and nurturing talent. She has a proven track record of powerful business results in corporate development, which will ensure that GODIVA continues to capture opportunities that honor its roots and align with its bold vision for the future,” said Murat Ulker, GODIVA’s chairman.

Afridi said she’s inspired to lead a Belgium-born, premium brand marked by nearly 95 years of craftsmanship and artisanal chocolate expertise. She aims to make GODIVA a destination for people looking to treat themselves in addition to the gift-givers who have been the brand’s more traditional demographic. What started in the Draps’ family kitchen in 1926 has become an iconic brand with a global footprint across 100 markets, reaching 4 billion consumers and making GODIVA a unique brand that’s synonymous with the world’s most delicious chocolate.

Looking to meet the needs of today's consumers, Afridi said she plans to grow the business in new channels and geographies, expand the product portfolio and augment the customer and consumer relations through digital.

"The exceptional quality of our products reflects our rich and beautiful heritage, dedication to innovation, and commitment to using the finest ingredients. We will continue to extend our reach and leverage an omnichannel approach to deliver on our beloved brand, maintaining a strong connection with our fans and ensuring our premium chocolates are more available and accessible to our global consumers," Afridi said.

We continue to be very focused on leveraging digital technology to anticipate the needs of consumers, exceed expectations, and make GODIVA the most top-of-mind premium chocolate brand. I am honored to work with my extraordinary team on these endeavors during such a pivotal time for GODIVA," she said.

At Yildiz Holding, Afridi played an instrumental role while the business transformed into a global snacking group with more than 300 brands available in over 120 countries. In addition to her operational experience, she led the acquisitions of iconic brands like GODIVA in 2008 and McVitie's, Carr's, Jacobs, and BN (United Biscuits) in 2014, the latter of which drove the creation of the pladis company, the third largest biscuit company in the world. Afridi also led the licensing deal for GODIVA in Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand. In addition, she spearheaded the acquisition and IPO of Sok Marketler, which is now the second largest discount retailer in Turkey, and Bizim Toptan, the leading discount retailer company in Turkey. Before Yildiz Holding, Afridi held leadership positions at other global companies, like Accenture and Arthur Andersen & Co.

She earned her MBA in Germany and a bachelor's degree in marketing and finance in Istanbul.

### **About GODIVA Chocolatier**

GODIVA Chocolatier is the global leader in premium, artisanal chocolate. The company was founded in Brussels in 1926 by Belgian Chocolatier, Pierre Draps. Nearly a century later, every piece of GODIVA chocolate is still bursting with quality, Belgian craftsmanship, and the world's finest ingredients. GODIVA has distribution in more than 100 countries across the globe. Customers can experience GODIVA at the iconic brand's chocolate boutiques, chocolate cafés, [GODIVA.com](https://www.godiva.com), and at many fine retailers. GODIVA is committed to innovative and delicious food and beverage products that exceed consumer expectations and create wonderful moments. From its famous truffles and shell-moulded chocolate pieces to its European-style biscuits, individually wrapped chocolates, gourmet coffees, hot cocoa, soft serve and other indulgences, GODIVA is dedicated to bringing the ultimate chocolate experience to the world. As a socially responsible business, GODIVA has global practices and programs designed to provide meaningful support to cocoa farmers, safeguard our environment, and empower the communities where we live and work. To learn more about these powerful initiatives, visit [GODIVA Cares](#).

## **About Yıldız Holding**

Yıldız Holding, headquartered in İstanbul, has over 300 brands available in more than 120 countries. The company, which is 100 percent owned by the Ülker Family, operates globally and serves a 4 billion population with its 61 factories and nearly 65,000 employees worldwide. The company is focused on confectionery (chocolate, biscuits, cakes, gum, candy) and retail business. Yıldız Holding increased its share in global markets with iconic brands like GODIVA, Ülker, and McVitie's under the roof of a single company. pladis is the home to beloved brands including McVitie's and Ülker and also distribute a range of GODIVA chocolates exclusively for consumer-packaged good channels around the world. In addition to GODIVA retail operations, Yıldız Holding also owns two leading retail chain stores based in Turkey – Şok Marketler and Bizim Toptan. Şok Marketler is the fastest-growing retail chain in Turkey, and Bizim Toptan is the country's biggest cash & carry brand in terms of the number of stores. Besides snacks and retail business, the company also produces food, frozen food, vegetable oils, margarines, processed meat and packaging materials. Besler, by far the leader of its industry, produces consumer margarines, oils, industrial and bakery margarines with its leading brands, BizimYağ and Teremyağ. Kerevitaş, as the first frozen food retail company in Turkey, offers the richest product range in the frozen food market with is SuperFresh brand. Founded within Yıldız Holding in 2019 with the purpose of driving the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Turkey, Yıldız Ventures supports innovative business ideas with three different programs – namely Acceleration, Incubation and Financial Investment. Gözde Girişim, a private equity fund that is listed on the İstanbul Stock Exchange, is also part of Yıldız Holding Group. Yıldız Holding has seven companies listed in Borsa İstanbul Stock Exchange. Among them, Ülker and Kerevitaş have been listed among the top public listed food companies. The company and its brands contribute to society through its social responsibility and sustainability activities in the environment, sports, education, health, and art.

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