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Wine Exhibition

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## **Singapore woos international wine industry with Government's waiver of taxes on exhibiting wines**

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### ***Exhibitors at Wine for Asia 2009 set to benefit from lower cost of participation at Asia's premier wine exhibition***

**5 March 2009, Singapore** – Singapore is wooing international wineries and exporters to participate in Wine for Asia 2009 with the Singapore Government's waiver of taxes and Goods and Services Tax (GST) on wines to be exhibited. The tax savings translate into lower costs of participation for exhibitors. This is an added draw for wineries and exporters – who want to get a share of the Asian wine import pie – to take part in WFA, which is a platform for them to make inroads into the region.

WFA, the region's most comprehensive wine exhibition, is expected to draw 350 international and local exhibitors occupying a total floor space of 5,800sqm. About 5,000 trade visitors from Asia and the Pacific are expected to turn up at the show. The exhibition, to be held at Suntec Singapore from 22 to 24 October, is organised by MP Wine Resources, a joint venture between MP International and Wine Resources. This is the seventh edition of the show.

The new tax exemption incentive is granted on up to three bottles of wine per label per day. For a normal exhibitor showcasing between 20 to 30 labels, this will translate into a saving of between \$1,800 to \$2,700 for a three-day event like Wine For Asia – a substantial savings for the exhibitors that will encourage them to bring in more labels. The savings overall are likely to be between S\$630,000 and about S\$1 million in total.

The tax exemption will also bring Singapore more in line with countries hosting similar wine trade events.

The Government's recent Budget announcement on the exemption of duty and GST on wines on exhibition and auctions is intended to take into account the effects of the current recession and to promote wine trading activities and to help Singapore's wine industry.

Already, wine promotion agencies based in Singapore, in their feedback to WFA organisers, have lauded this new initiative. Most felt that with the reduced cost, wineries will be able to showcase more wines at trade exhibitions which will be a win-win outcome for both the wineries and the buyers. Leading the foreign participation at WFA 2009 will be Austrade and Sopexa, which will organise the Australian and French pavilions respectively.

Organisers





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Said Ms Sylvia Phua, chief executive officer of MP International: "The Government's waiver of duty and tax on exhibiting wines provides a timely boost to the industry and to regional events held in Singapore. This is much-needed in view of the current global recession.

"Despite there being a recession, the wine-drinking trend is here to stay because people have realised the benefits of drinking wine. The fact that wine drinking has risen and increasingly become a lifestyle choice in Asia also means that WFA 2009 will still draw people from the regional wine trade to come and source for wines at the show, which has become a one-stop sourcing venue."

### **Aggressive international wine marketing programme**

WFA2009 organisers are mounting an aggressive marketing campaign in the major wine-producing countries to draw wineries and exporters to WFA2009. It will work through a combination of wine bodies and associations, road shows and agents in major wine-producing countries to reach out to the international wine industry. Among other partners, WFA2009 organisers have tied up with agencies such as Austrade and Sopexa to market the show.

The organisers are also planning road shows in Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam to attract trade visitors to WFA2009, a one-stop shopping venue for the region's wine industries.

According to industry research, Asia's wine market is expected to grow by between 10 to 20 percent per annum over the next five years, with China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Korea leading the charge. The consumption value in Asia (excluding Japan) is expected to double, reaching US\$17 billion in 2012 and jumping to US\$27 billion in 2017.

Singapore is becoming a highly influential hub for wine in Asia, which has made WFA 2009 a natural business platform for wine producers who are forging into the Asia Pacific to deepen their footprint in the Asian wine industry.

The excellent wine logistics infrastructure and the sophistication in wine consumption in Singapore are some of the advantages that these wineries which participate in WFA 2009 can ride on.

### **New value-adding show offerings for WFA 2009**

This year's WFA 2009 will feature a number of new initiatives. Among them will be a post-WFA roadshow in Shanghai, China. This will provide exhibitors with an opportunity to make inroads into China, the world's 9<sup>th</sup> largest wine market by volume. The value of imports into China is expected to reach US\$870 million by 2017, up almost five-fold from US\$184 million in 2007.

Another initiative is the introduction of a new segment – Delicatessen for Wine – which showcases an interesting array of food best paired with wine.

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Said Mr Joel Lee, project director of Wine For Asia: "WFA has been an effective business platform. For WFA to remain the leading wine exhibition in the region, there is a need to introduce new offerings for our exhibitors and visitors to further develop and grow their businesses. This is an integral part of the sustaining appeal and value that the WFA shows have consistently offered each year."

Apart from the new initiatives, WFA has also launched Vinosity Singapore 2009 which features a collective staging of events held in conjunction with WFA 2009. It aims to advance the knowledge, understanding and embracing of wine in Asia, as well as to profile the vibrancy of the wine scene in Singapore. Among the partner activities include International Congress of Chinese Cuisine & Wine, Asia Sommelier Forum, International Wine Importer Course as well as special wine presentations.

WFA 2009 has the support of the Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau (SECB), Austrade, Sopexa, the German Embassy (Singapore), Singapore Food Manufacturers' Association and International Bartenders Association.

For WFA 2009 exhibition space enquiry, please contact Amy Lim at tel: +65 6393 0226 or email [amylin@mpinetwork.com](mailto:amylin@mpinetwork.com) or visit the event website at [www.wineforasia.com](http://www.wineforasia.com)

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