

PRESS RELEASE

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Asia's Most Comprehensive International
Wine Exhibition

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Wine For Asia 2009 surpasses expectations

Despite recession, the show attracted more than 4,000 visitors, 376 exhibitors

Singapore, 16 November 2009 - Wine For Asia (WFA) 2009 surpassed all expectations of the organisers, with a record 4,043 visitors from 50 countries and positive feedback from happy exhibitors and buyers. The organisers had expected about 4,000 visitors.

Apart from the congregation of wine importers and distributors, key buyers of wine for large consumers, such as hotels, restaurants chains and supermarkets also made use of the opportunity to visit Wine For Asia to source for supplies and establish important business contacts.

In addition, there were 150 hosted buyers from China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

The show, the seventh in the series, was organised by MP Wine Resource Pte Ltd, a joint venture between MP International, an exhibition, conference and events organiser, and Wine Resources, a wine consultancy.

Said Sylvia Phua, chief executive officer of MP International: "We are very pleased with the turnout of exhibitors, buyers, as well as visitors. From the feedback given by exhibitors, they are very pleased with the quality of visitors at the show. Many have found valuable contacts and interested distributors. Negotiations will naturally follow on from this exhibition and contracts confirmed in the next few months."

Mr Joel Lee, WFA's Project Director, added: "The strong take-up of exhibition space at this year's WFA is a very positive outcome especially against a backdrop of an unprecedented global economic downturn and challenging business climate. This is a testimony of the endorsement and robust support from our exhibitors and partners."

There were 376 exhibitors, with an estimated 50,000 bottles from 30 countries, including Australia, California, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, Singapore and South America.

Despite the recession, the three-day Wine for Asia 2009 held from October 22 to 24 at Suntec Singapore grew in size, spreading over 5,800sqm compared with 5,100sqm in 2008.

It also enjoyed strong support from Government agencies such as the Singapore Tourism Board and International Enterprise Singapore (IE Singapore), as well as from SOPEXA, the agency for the promotion of French food, wine and spirits, and the Australian Trade Commission (Austrade), the Australian government's trade and investment development agency.

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Organisers





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Of utmost importance was the feedback from both exhibitors and buyers at the show. Said Mr John Jaunutis of Landhaus Estate Wineries Pte Ltd, an exhibitor at WFA 2009: "Prior to us coming out here, we were told that a lot of people from Singapore and Southeast Asia were used to taking cheaper wines.

"However, we found that the palates of people in this region are very well-developed and they appreciate good quality wines and can differentiate between good quality and lower quality wines."

Landhaus, a producer of medium to high quality wines, met quality buyers and distributors from Indonesia, Thailand, Laos and Hongkong and found "a very good local distributor" at WFA. The winery produces 5,000 cases of wine a year and intends to export 30% of its production to Southeast Asia.

Mr Peter Metzler, export manager of Schmitt Sohne Weinkellerei, was also pleased with the quality of buyers he met. His winery also entered 11 of its labels in the Wine Style Asia Award held in conjunction with WFA, and nine of them won awards. One of them, "Anything Goes", won a Trophy out of the eight awarded for the best in the show.

Mr Abraham Cordoves, president of Banquets in Style Restaurant in the Philippines, who came to the show to shop for wines for his restaurant, found WFA 2009 to be "a very good show".

"I have found some very good wines here and am talking to the suppliers," he said.

Said Mr Nathan Pakeri, from Palm Services, a local F&B Consultancy: "I am now scouting for fine food and drink on behalf of regional hotels and restaurants. I am interested in seeing more pairing of food with wines, as that is the area we are interested in.

"The quality of exhibitors is fine. I have found the right contacts, I like the atmosphere and the sampling. I would like to see more on the educational aspects of wine covered – which wines go with different cheeses, for example. Also, some nice music here would be good!"

Other highlights included the Wine Style Asia Award (WSAA) 2009, the Southeast Asia Best Sommelier Competition Finals, a Penfolds Grange Vertical Tasting, and a Pinot Noir Forum.

WSAA 2009, the sixth in the series, attracted 520 entries from international wineries and local wine importers. The awards were presented at a glittering gala dinner at The St Regis Singapore on the eve of Wine For Asia.

This year's judging panel was headed by Mr John Chua, a veteran international wine judge. The eleven other panellists, comprised established names in the wine community, such as Kym Milne MW, Lisa Perotti-Brown MW, Subhash Arora, president of Delhi Wine Club, Fumiko Arisaka from Japan, Tran Ngoc Chau from Vietnam and Suzie Wu, a veteran wine journalist, and chief sommeliers from The St Regis Singapore and Hilton Kuala Lumpur.

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The breakdown of results is as follows:

Trophy Award	8 winners
Gold Platinum Award	27 winners
Gold Classic Award	2 winners
Silver Award	99 winners
Bronze Award	145 winners

WFA 2009 also had some new features, such as the Spirits Pavilion, which drew 26 participants from Australia, Brazil, France, Germany, India, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Peru, Scotland, Singapore, United Kingdom and the United States.

A variety of whisky, vodka, bourbon and cognac was displayed. There was also a mixology bar where world-class mixologists from the industry mixed cocktails and shared their extensive knowledge of their craft.

There was also a ViniCasino, a casino-game based on the popular television game show – Deal or no deal? Visitors had to pit their wits – knowledge of wine in this case – against experienced sommeliers. There were chips just as in casinos, but they could be exchanged for gifts, not money.

The next Wine For Asia is scheduled to be held from 11 to 13 November 2010. Details of the event will be released shortly. Interested participants can contact Joel Lee at tel: +65 6393 0218 or email: joellee@mpinetwork.com

Note to Editor: Wine For Asia 2009 photographs can be found on the show website or are available on request.

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Organisers

