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## **Wine Style Asia Award 2009 scores three firsts**

### **It is first wine award to receive the new tax exemption incentive on wines to be judged – among other firsts**

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**15 June 2009, Singapore** – The Wine Style Asia Award (WSAA), having established itself as one of the region's foremost wine awards, will score three firsts this year.

It will be the first wine award to be granted the waiver of duties and Goods and Services Tax (GST) on wines to be judged. The tax savings will translate into lower costs of participation for wineries and exporters. Depending on the value of the wine, this will translate into savings of up to 50% for the entrants.

Returning with a higher profile, the competition has for the first time secured the backing of the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and International Enterprise Singapore (IE Singapore).

And, for the first time, the Award will culminate in a gala dinner on 21 October at The St Regis, the official venue partner for WSAA. Entries for the Award, by now an eagerly-anticipated event in the wine community, have opened. The Award is expected to receive strong support from international wineries and local wine importers.

WSAA 2009, the sixth in the series, is held in conjunction with Wine For Asia (WFA), the region's most comprehensive wine show, which will be held at Suntec Singapore from 22 to 24 October. It is organised by MP Wine Resources.

WSAA is unique in that it recognises quality wines desired for the growing wine consumption in the Asia market. The Award also aims to connect wineries and exporters with Asian wine consumers and distributors.

Said Ms Sylvia Phua, chief executive officer of MP International: "WSAA has grown to be one of the most recognised and respected wine awards in Asia as it has been effective in connecting producers of quality wines to the growing wine markets in Asia. The strong support from STB and IE Singapore is a clear testimony to the quality of the Award. We are confident that WSAA will continue to grow from strength to strength in the coming years.

"At the same time, the Award also recognises, encourages and acknowledges winemakers who are making the highest quality wines. Market-based awards like WSAA are critical in helping winemakers strive for improvement in quality and to be innovative to meet the expectations of Asian consumers.

"The objective of WSAA is to offer to Asian consumers a range of award-winning wines that have been judged as the best in their categories by an expert panel."

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Organisers





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Increasingly, consumers have come to regard a wine with an award from WSAA as a mark, not only of honour and distinction, but also quality. It gives consumers the added confidence in purchasing quality wines. Importers of WSAA award-winning wines enjoy robust sales.

Said Mr Leonardo Noto, chief executive of Magma Trade, WSAA 2008 Trophy winner for the Terrasse Riesling 2007: "I have been participating in the Wine Style Asia Award for the past three years. The stamp of approval from the Award has been a great boost for my wine sales. We have sold out the past award-winning wines."

### **A panel of experienced international wine judges**

This year's panel is headed by Mr John Chua, a veteran international wine judge and who, in 1994, pioneered and trained Singapore Airlines cabin crew in sommeliership, one of the first airlines to have such a programme. He is also the holder of numerous international wine certificates and is presently a wine educator, service skills trainer, and an accredited lecturer for l'Ecole du Vin de Bordeaux (Bordeaux Wine School) for Southeast Asia.

Joining him will be eleven other panelists comprising 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 and Hilton Kuala Lumpur.

"Each of these judges is extremely experienced and we are very pleased to have such a distinguished panel here as part of this year's Wine Style Asia Award," commented Mr Chua. "These judges have great experience in tasting and have discerning palates."

The panel of experts will judge the various wines in blind tastings over three days. The wines are grouped according to regions, styles, grape varieties, vintages and price points. Judging is based on quality and the extent to which the wine is representative of its category. The best wines in each category are awarded Trophy, Gold, Silver and Bronze medals.

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