

WINE FOR ASIA

The only Asian wine exhibition to welcome both Trade and the individual wine enthusiast



The Wine for Asia show celebrated its 9th edition, 22-24 October 2009, at Suntec City, Singapore, cementing its reputation as an annual wine-centric show that welcomes both Trade members and the region's individual wine enthusiast.

In upping the ante, this year, the organisers enticed the public to attend with a online registration entry fee of only SGD 5. This S\$5 fee entitled the registrant to visit the show on ALL three days and participate in all programmes.

The Show enjoyed support from national and trade bodies of France, Australia, Spain, Italy, California, Portugal, Austria and Germany. A slew of international & regional food & beverage publications also lent their support.

The efforts of individual booths of some 367 companies were reinforced with a tightly scheduled programme of Business Forums & Seminars, B2B Networking, featured tastings and special events. Special events include a Southeast Asia Sommelier Competition, a Wine Safari Tour and, an innovative ViniCasino that attracted curious participants eager to learn more about wine.

A regular feature, Wine Style Asia Awards, had experienced wine judges, resident in Asia, select & highlight wines that would be attractive to the Asian palate.

The featured tastings & seminars were very popular with visitors as these were show-stopping events. A 20-year vertical tasting of Penfolds Grange was the highlight event. Among other notable events were The Great Bordeaux 2005 & 2006 Tasting, a Pinot Noir forum, Alsace Wine seminar, German Varietal & First Growth Tastings, Spanish wines with Tapas and an indigenous Italian varietal seminar.

Certainly an activity-filled event over three days!



The German delegation brought some glamour to their Pavilion and events, where the newly-crowned German Wine Queen 2009, graced this year's show. Ms. Sonja Christ's selection as German Wine Queen, required intensive knowledge about German wines, in addition to her obviously physical attributes. German wines tasted that much better in her gracious presence

& guidance.



A wine professional, Mr. Remie Law, currently residing in Penampang, was invited to present two seminars.



On the afternoon of the first day, he presented the only seminar that featured a food & wine pairing to about 30 persons. He presented six wines paired with five different tapas (Spanish Dim Sum). A Pere Ventura Cava, Spain's sparkling wine made in the Champagne method, was paired with a *Empinadillas de Atun* (Tuna Puffs). This was followed by quintessentially Spanish Fino Sherry by Gonzales Byass, paired with *Croqueta de Pollo* (Croquet of Chicken). The tour of Spain proceeded to the central plateau with a Verdejo white wine before continuing with 3 red wines. These were a 100% Bobal (La Casilla) and a Garnacha (Grenache)-Syrah blend (Tres Patas), both made from vineyards just outside the Spanish capital of Madrid. *Paella Valenciana*, a Spanish rice dish baked in a pan, was offered together with *Chorizo envuelto con Tocino* (Spanish Sausage wrapped in Bacon). The final wine was a world-famous Rioja Reserva under the Nerba brand. It was paired with *Las Albóndigas en el Salsa de Tomate* (Beef balls with Tomato Salsa). The tapas were sponsored by Serenity, Spanish Bar & Restaurant, located at Vivocity, facing Sentosa Island.



On Saturday morning, Mr. Law presented eight wines made from lesser-known indigenous Italian varietals. With insider information from two of the producers, Remie proceeded to tour Italy's regions of Veneto, Friuli, coastal Tuscany, Sicily, Piemonte, even the tiny island of Pantelleria. This talk attracted an over-subscription of 47 persons.

Veneto provided Piera Martellozzo's Prosecco, the premier sparkling wine of Italy. The same producer showed off a white Friulano and a red Refosco from Friuli, both very enjoyable by the participants.



The other white wine was Vermentino by Sada, grown along the Tuscany coast. This was an intense wine with a voluptuous body that will marry well with white meat dishes.

From the Mafia island of Sicily, the Mafiaso's wine secret is out. The red wine served during covert meetings in isolated locales has been discovered by the wine world. Our sample was Vino Tonino's Nero d'Avola, which showed the lusty flavours of crushed plums on a dusty hillside orchard.

The region of Piemonte, famous for its Barolo, Barbaresco and Barbera, was still able to thrill with 2 more indigenous red grapes, found in small quantities. These were from Casa Martelletti vineyards and the varietals were AlbaRossa and Ruche. The AlbaRossa combines the best of Barbaresco and Barbera varietals. The Ruche was surprising with its fresh sweet red cherry aromas and light tannins. An Indian wine expert reckons this wine will match well with a variety of spicy Indian dishes.



Finally, a luscious dessert wine, rated Italy's sweet secret, called Passito de Pantelleria by Terra dei Sesi. The wine is made from local Zibbibo grapes that have been sun-dried before being crushed to make this wine made for vanilla ice-cream. This wine is only produced in a tiny island, located midway between Italy and the northern coast of Africa.

However, the best tip of this session was given by Mr. Davide Sada of Tuscany. He noted that Italy do produce a great variety of wines. This variety would be utterly confusing to a visitor keen to discover Italian wines. Therefore, one should simply ask for Vino dei Casa (wine of the restaurant/cafe) where ever one is having a meal. The "house" wine will invariably be a local wine and best suited to match its local cuisine. Simply note down the name if you enjoyed it with your meal!