

Hong Kong and Bordeaux forge closer ties on co-operation in wine-related businesses

The Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Commerce, Industry and Tourism), Miss Yvonne Choi, today (May 25) signed a supplemental Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Co-operation in Wine-related Businesses with the President of the Bordeaux Chamber of Commerce and Industry of France, Mr Laurent Courbu, to enhance co-operation between Hong Kong and Bordeaux in wine-related businesses.

This supplemental agreement serves to expand the scope of co-operation by adding new elements to the wine MOU signed between Hong Kong and Bordeaux in October 2008.

"A relatively new promotion initiative is the pairing of wine with Asian food. This enriches our wine culture and capitalises on Hong Kong's strength as a gourmet centre for the region," Miss Choi said at the signing ceremony.

"We will collaborate with Bordeaux through, for example, chef exchange programmes between our training institutions."

Noting that marketing wine required sound logistics, Miss Choi said the Bordeaux chamber had been developing measures to help enhance traceability of wines from Bordeaux to distribution points including Hong Kong.

"Bordeaux is carrying out research on technologies that may help with the authentication of wines. We look forward to sharing our experience in this area," she said.

Another important area for further collaboration is the organisation of the Wine and Dine Festival in the autumn of 2010 and 2011, following the success of the first festival held last year at the West Kowloon waterfront.

"This year's Wine and Dine Festival in October looks set to be even larger, more stylish and to make a greater impact than the first. It will be held over four days, one day longer than last year, and followed by a city-wide 'wine and dine month'," Miss Choi said.

Miss Choi was pleased to note that the partnership between Hong Kong and

Bordeaux had brought early success and inspired optimism for the future, adding that the signing of this supplemental MOU signalled a new phase of friendship and joint venture.

"I look forward to even closer ties between Bordeaux's vineyards and Hong Kong's marketing outlets for our mutual benefit," she said.

France is Hong Kong's largest wine supplier, accounting for some 56% of its total wine imports by value. Since the exemption of wine duties in early 2008, the value of wine imports from France to Hong Kong has increased by almost 160%, amounting to €252 million, in the financial year ending March 2010.

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**Gist of the HK-Bordeaux
Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on
Co-operation in Wine-related Businesses**

- Further to the original MOU signed in October 2008, the supplemental MOU strengthens co-operation between Hong Kong and the Bordeaux of France in the following areas :
 - (a) **continued partnership in the organisation of the Wine and Dine Festival** – riding on the success of the inaugural Wine and Dine Festival in Hong Kong in 2009, the Bordeaux side will continue to help organise the Festival in the fall of 2010 and 2011;
 - (b) **wine storage facilities and wine traceability** – The two sides will (i) encourage exchanges and sharing of experience on issues which help enhance traceability of wines from production facility to distribution points; and (ii) review best practices and creative ideas (including technological researches) which may help traceability and authentication of wines; and
 - (c) **pairing of wine with Asian food** – both sides will encourage joint operations to promote wine and Asian (particularly Chinese) food pairings both in Hong Kong and Bordeaux, including exchange programmes for chefs, students and training staff, scholarships and study missions.

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