

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Asia Wine Institute and SJM host Macau’s first “2023 SJM Asia Top Sommelier Summit” to boost the exchange of knowledge in the wine industry

For the first time in Macau, SJM Resorts, S.A. (“SJM”) is partnering with the Asia Wine Institute to co-organise and title sponsor the “2023 SJM Asia Top Sommelier Summit 2023” from 18 to 20 October. The summit brings together leading experts in wine from across Asia to discuss and jointly promote the advancement of the wine industry. SJM and the Asia Wine Institute are working together to accelerate the growth of “MICE + tourism” in Macau ; provide an exchange of knowledge for the wine industry; establish a platform for sommeliers from China to expand their reach globally; reinforce Macau’s role as a “Creative City of Gastronomy”; and offer a diverse programme of events to boost greater international visitation into Macau.

An opening ceremony was held today at Grand Lisboa Macau, with more than 300 wine industry professionals, local associations and students from the Court of Master Sommeliers Accreditation in attendance. The ceremony was also graced by Guests of Honour including Mr. Glen Chong, Head of Licensing and Inspection Department of the Macao Government Tourism Office; Ms. Gloria Chak, Convention & Exhibition Industry Development Division Manager of the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute; Dr. Christy Ng, School of Hospitality Management - Coordinator for Culinary Arts Management Programme of Macao Institute for Tourism Studies, Mr Brian Julyan, The Court of Master Sommeliers Worldwide President, Mr. Rob Hirst, Founder of Wine List Awards, Mr. Benjamin Toh, Chief Operating Officer of Finance and Development of SJM, and Mr. Tommy Lam, Founder and Chairman of the Asia Wine Institute.

Mr. Benjamin Toh, Chief Operating Officer of Finance and Development of SJM, remarked, “SJM has earned an outstanding reputation in the world of wines, boasting the most extensive and diverse collection in Asia. Additionally, our portfolio of restaurants serves as a testament to our unwavering commitment to delivering unparalleled wines and services which consistently earned us top industry accolades. Building on this strong foundation, we aim not only to set high standards for ourselves but also to inspire and cultivate emerging talents. We also strive to set benchmarks for excellence across the Chinese wine industry and elevate the very fabric of the wine and dine landscape. Co-organising this Summit with the Asia Wine Institute perfectly aligns with this vision.

Together, we plan to harness the synergy of ‘gastronomy + tourism’ to attract more international visitors eager to experience the culinary richness of our UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy.”

In his opening speech at the opening ceremony, Mr. Tommy Lam, Founder and Chairman of the Asia Wine Institute said, “We have more than 200 Sommeliers including [SOMM100] Graduate Sommeliers from different parts of China gathered in Macau for this very packed program over 3 days. The city has never been packed with so many Champion Sommeliers – 9 from Asia, 14 from Mainland China and more, making it almost 30 Champions under one roof. This Summit kicks off with the 3-day Court of Master Sommelier Program with 62 candidates enrolled, an extremely high number in Asia, leading this largest-ever program in Macau.”

Mr. Brian Julyan MS, The Court of Master Sommeliers Worldwide President also delivered a keynote address about the future of the wine industry during the opening ceremony. Mr. Julyan is renowned for having established CMS as an educational body to serve as a knowledge base for sommeliers and to offer exams for attaining the highly recognised Master Sommelier status. Following on from his speech, a distinguished panel of 30 top China winery owners and ten presidents from sommelier associations around the world including Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan region and Thailand held an educational “Asia Wine Market Dialogue” to discuss the current and future trends of the industry.

The engaging three-day summit will feature a number of important educational, networking and awards events including the Asia Wines & Spirits Awards (AWSA) – Sommeliers; the AWSA – Award-Winning Chinese Wines Carnival; The 15th China Sommelier Competition and the 2023 China’s Wine List of The Year Awards Ceremony. The summit will serve as a beneficial platform for all attendees to gain greater insight into both current and future trends of the Asian wine industry, while also helping to establish and strengthen industry connections and boost collaborations.

The acclaimed Court of Master Sommeliers Accreditation providing professional sommeliers in Macau with training and accreditation to advance their knowledge of wines, while also elevating their skills in service and beverage management.



The Guests of Honour officiate the opening ceremony for the “SJM Asia Top Sommelier Summit 2023”.



Mr. Benjamin Toh, Chief Operating Officer of Finance and Development of SJM delivers a welcome speech at the opening ceremony.



Mr. Rob Hirst, Founder of Wine List Awards delivers a speech at the opening ceremony.



Mr. Brian Julyan MS, Founder of the Court of Master Sommeliers delivers a keynote speech about the future of the wine industry.



Presidents from sommelier associations around the world and top China winery owners hold an educational Asia Wine Market Dialogue to discuss the current and future trends of the industry.