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## MEDIA RELEASE

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**Damon Yuen and Maxim's Palace to present some Serious Beaujolais  
*Cantonese Cuisine Winemaker Dinner celebrates the launch of Domaine de la  
Madone's Beaujolais Nouveau 2008***

HKSAR, China, 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2008— On 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2008, during the week of the release of Beaujolais Nouveau 2008, Hong Kong wine instructor Damon Yuen (“Damon”) and Maxim's Palace, the flagship Cantonese restaurant of Maxim's Group (HKEx: will seek to change wine lovers' perception of Beaujolais as light-bodied, simple, fruity wines in their Cantonese cuisine winemaker dinner entitled, “Serious Beaujolais, Cantonese Cuisine”. Priced at \$398.00 NET per person, the dinner pairs five Beaujolais wines of Domaine de la Madone with eight Cantonese dishes.

Partnering with SOPEXA Hong Kong, the French Ministry of Agriculture and Inter-Beaujolais, with Domaine de la Madone wines sponsored by cool-climate boutique wines merchant Cottage Vineyards (International), Damon and Maxim's Palace, with the presence of Domaine de la Madone's winemaker himself, Mr. Bruno Bererd (“Bruno”), hope to revamp the somewhat less popular image of Beaujolais, by offering to Hong Kong wine drinkers the opportunity to experience “more serious Beaujolais” paired with local Cantonese cuisine.

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The Beaujolais wines of Domaine de la Madone are “more serious” as Bruno does NOT use the traditional technique of carbonic maceration where fermentation, using whole clusters of grapes, takes place within the grape to create wines lower in tannins and preponderantly more fruity.

Instead, Bruno applies production techniques more in keeping with **serious**

**Burgundy** wines: (1) strenuous manual efforts to ensure that grapes are picked at the moment of ideal ripeness (some 2-3 weeks later than their neighbours), (2) rigorous selection to reject anything other than the ideal, and (3) full de-stemming to eliminate harsher tannins. With a selection of his Beaujolais-Villages, he even ages the wines in oak barrels, dispelling the notion that all Beaujolais wines should be drunk young.

The result are bigger, richer wines with an uncommon power and intensity which could be mistaken for Premier Cru Burgundies, in short, the perfect match for classic Cantonese cuisine which require wines with ripe, fine tannins, higher acidity, and an inherent spiciness to take ingredients such as chili peppers, green onion, ginger, garlic, preserved vegetables, and soy sauce.

Robert Parker describes the Madone style “...as hedonistic and compelling an example of Beaujolais as [wine lovers] are likely to find”.

The dinner displays the potential of “serious Beaujolais” in matching with Cantonese cuisine through pairings such as the Domaine de la Madone Beaujolais Nouveau 2008 with Crispy Barbecued Suckling Pig, and Stewed Sliced Pork Belly with Preserved Vegetables with the Domaine de la Madone Cuvée Fûts de Chêne 2005.

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The dinner even exhibits some rarities and surprises, for example, a white Beaujolais paired with Baked Codfish Wrapped in Bacon Roll, and even a Beaujolais Rosé matched with Sautéed King Prawn with Thai Sauce

Said Damon, “Beaujolais, when produced with care, is fantastic for matching with Cantonese cuisine, but many Hong Kong wine lovers have not had the chance to discover this affinity as many have even shied away from drinking these wines due to bad experiences with lower quality wines in the past. Through this wine dinner, the Maxims group and I hope to dispel these notions and encourage Hong Kong drinkers to try Beaujolais again”.

Mr. Raymond Wong, Senior Operations Manager, Maxims’ Group Cantonese Cuisine said, “We are honoured to work with Damon to hold a winemaker dinner that would not only match well with our quality Cantonese cuisine, but also bring something unusual to Hong Kong consumers. This dinner is a fantastic opportunity to showcase the aim of our restaurants where we try to bring a “nouveau” touch to classic Chinese cuisine”.

After his cooperation with Cottage Vineyards (International) in August in promoting French Jura Yellow Wine paired with Chinese yellow oil crab, this ‘Serious Wines, Beaujolais Nouveau’, marks a second exercise this year by Damon to bring neglected or lesser known wine regions to the Hong Kong consumer.

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### **About Damon Yuen**

Damon is a Free-Lance Wine & Spirits Educator, Writer & Consultant offering wine & spirits education and consulting services in Cantonese, Mandarin, and English including wine & spirits courses, tutored wine tasting, corporate wine events, wine dinners and food pairing, wine list design, and wine consultancy services.

With twenty-seven years' Hong Kong industry experience in the hotel food and beverage sector, nineteen at a management level in four- and five-star hotels, Damon possesses nineteen years' Food and Beverage Training experience with specializations in cocktail, wine and spirits training. He is a regular instructor at the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions Spare Time Study Centre, Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Cocktail School, and the Vocational Training Council. His last post prior to expanding his career full-time in the Wine & Spirits education and consultancy sector was Beverage and Catering Manager at the South Pacific Hotel in Causeway Bay.

Damon is a Founding Committee Member in the Hong Kong Sommelier Association, the China Hong Kong Bartenders' Association, and the Hong Kong Cocktail School respectively.

### **About Maxim's Palace**

Maxim's Palace, decorated sumptuously, is the Maxim Group's flagship Chinese banquet venue. In terms of food, Maxim's Palace is renowned for its quality Cantonese dim sum and creative menu, supplying over 100 Cantonese dim sum and dishes, supplying you these also in a tasteful environment. Maxim's Palace with over

100 branches, located in prime locations easily accessible, is the prime choice for Chinese banquets.

### **About Maxim's Group**

Maxim Group, founded in 1956, is Hong Kong's largest and most diversified restaurant group, with more than 70 brands, more than 640 branches, and servicing more than 540,000 patrons daily. With a commitment to innovation, the group is committed to providing customers with a "happy" and "unforgettable" eating experience. The group operates a large range of dine-in and take-out concepts, including Chinese cuisine, Asian cuisine, western cuisine, fast food, cakeshops, cafés in Hong Kong and Macau, sushi, and outside catering.

### **About Domaine de la Madone**

Domaine de la Madone, is a 28-hectare estate, producing 160,000 bottles per year, in southern Beaujolais at Le Perréon, with a grape-growing ancestry dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Today, the three-brother team of Bruno, Olivier, and Frédéric Bererd, farm, make and market all the wines made from grapes from the family's vineyards. As the winery does not use the traditional technique of carbonic maceration on their Gamay grapes, instead using traditional Burgundian techniques, Domaine de la Madone's wines are bigger, richer, and more substantial wines which in a blind tasting could be pegged for serious Premier Cru Burgundies. Robert Parket describes the Madone style as "... about as hedonistic and compelling an example of Beaujolais as readers are likely to find".