

m.a.x. concepts



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ancient Chatus to meet its match in Red Penang Thai Lamb Curry *m.a.x. concepts, Damon Yuen, and Cottage Vineyards (International) to launch world's first joint one-year 'Discoveries' Winemaker Tour'*

HONG KONG, 22 January, 2009 — On Wednesday 25th February, 2009, wine and food lovers can experience gastronomic fireworks as spice meets spice when ancient French spicy grape Chatus meets spicy, heavy Thai Penang Red Curry with Lamb Loin & Grilled Eggplant in m.a.x. concepts LIAN's Ardèche, Côtes du Rhône Domaine du Grangeon Viet-Thai cuisine French Côtes du Rhône winemaker dinner, entitled "Spice on Spice".

The dinner, led by the winemaker, Mr. Christophe Reynouard, and Hong Kong wine instructor, Mr. Damon Yuen, is the inauguration event championing the launch of a joint one-year "Discoveries Winemaker Tour" beginning 25th February 2009 between Maxims Group's m.a.x. concepts division, cool-climate boutique wines specialist Cottage Vineyards (International) ("Cottage Vineyards"), and Damon Yuen.

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Each themed monthly winemaker tour, with the respective winemaker and Hong Kong wine instructor, Mr. Damon Yuen, acting as the tour guides, aims to bring wine and food lovers to experience one specific wine producer's/wine region's wines matched with a rainbow of different cuisines in m.a.x concepts' range of restaurants including Western, South-East Asian, and Japanese cuisines.

By participating in the winemaker events, wine and food lovers will each be granted a "Passport", giving them access to various special offers at restaurants of m.a.x. concepts and at Cottage Vineyards.

The theme of the first winemaker tour, the Domaine du Grangeon winemaker tour (25th to 28th February, 2009), is "Ancient grapes, ancient terroir, timeless wines".

A highlight of the tour involves the pairing of LIAN's *Thai Penang Red Curry with Lamb Loin & Grilled Eggplant* with the ancient indigenous French grape varietal, "Chatus", which, may be perhaps the only other surviving indigenous French grape varietal still vinified today (the other being the much more familiar Pinot Noir of Burgundy).

The Chatus grape varietal, existing in Ardèche, Côtes du Rhône, long before Roman settlement in the area, was listed amongst the 38 principal French grape varieties described in French agronomist Oliver de Serres's 1600 work, "Theatre of Agriculture".

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Besides the epitome Chatus pairing, other memorable pairings Christophe's "Ardèche Condrieu", a viognier paired with a green Thai fish curry, his "Burgundy-like" Syrah 2006 paired with Vietnamese raw beef soup (Pho bo), and his Cuvée Bergougnou 2006, a "Burgundy made using a Bordeaux blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot grapes from the Côte du Rhône" paired with *Char-grilled Pork Neck (Kor Mu Yang)*.

The dinner ends with two Vin de Paille ("straw wine") sweet wines, normally associated with Jura winemaking – in white, the Domaine du Grangeon Cuvée Grangeon made from Viognier matched with a selection of cheeses and dried fruits, and in red, the Domaine du Grangeon Cuvée Mon Coeur 2007, made from Gamay, powerful and sweet, yet lively enough to match with a warm chocolate pudding dessert.

Mr Thomas Hahn,, General Manager of m.a.x. concepts, Maxim's Group said, "Just like a holiday tour operator, to be successful, it is very important to introduce participants to unusual places which they would not discover on their own, to design each tour so it offers a variety of interesting site destinations, and to lead these tours with professional and entertaining tour guides. By cooperating with both Cottage Vineyards who offers an exciting portfolio of unusual high quality wines and wine instructor Damon Yuen, who has a history of being able to educate and entertain at the same time, we have the perfect recipe. We are sure wine and food lovers will enjoy these tours, especially since the tours will allow them to enjoy a number of variations of our restaurants' signature dishes paired with memorable wines at unusually competitive prices. And, participation will allow participants, given our "Passport" to then dine in our restaurants, continuing their experiences with more discounts and special offers"

Ada Leung, Managing Director of Cottage Vineyards said, “We at Cottage Vineyards are happy to partner with the m.a.x. concepts and wine instructor Damon Yuen on this one-year long project as m.a.x. concepts restaurants are the perfect venue and expression to enable us to realize our company’s mission of helping wine and food lovers to discover some of the wine world’s best kept secrets, and Mr. Yuen would be able to explain the wines and pairings to local wine drinkers.”

Hong Kong wine instructor, Damon Yuen adds, “Wine education should be fun and practical. This series of winemaker tours in m.a.x. concepts’ themed restaurants certainly makes this possible. I have always been intrigued with the daring selection of wines from Cottage Vineyards (International), and the wines of Domaine du Grangeon are a remarkable example. It is a great study of “ancient terroir” and their effect on winemaking as even Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot wines are barely recognizable when subjected to the unusual ancient terroir of Domaine du Grangeon’s Ardèche terraced vineyards. As the winemaker is willing to experiment with different grapes not normally planted in the region and to apply different, modern winemaking techniques to make even tannic, ancient grapes such as Chatus tame enough to drink now, the wines can become timeless classics, great for all kinds of food, from Thai curries and heavy red meats to delicate seafoods and salads.

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The Domaine du Grangeon “Ancient grapes, ancient terroir, timeless wines” tour consists of the following three designations: (1) the inauguration 9-wine-8-course ‘Spice on Spice’ Viet-Thai winemaker dinner at LIAN priced at \$598.00 NET per person, (2) an 8-wine-7-course western cuisine winemaker dinner entitled, ‘New Classics’ at Lawry’s The Prime Rib priced at \$598.00 NET per person, and a Saturday afternoon assorted canapés and wine-matching 8-wine tasting seminar entitled ‘Ancient grapes, ancient terroir, timeless wines’ led by Mr. Damon Yuen at Pearl on the Peak, priced at HK\$298.00 NET per person.

All events require advanced ticket purchases. From 30th January, 2009 onwards, interested parties can purchase tickets for the event from designated restaurants of m.a.x. concepts or through Cottage Vineyards by Tel. at (852) 2395 1293 or by E-mail at tastings@cottagevineyards.com.

A media information session about the Domaine du Grangeon “Ancient grapes, ancient terroir, timeless wines” tour and the new Discoveries Winemaker Tour 2009 programme involving top management from m.a.x. concepts, Cottage Vineyards, Mr. Damon Yuen, and Mr. Christophe Reynouard, is scheduled for Wednesday 25th February, 2009 3:30pm at Lian. Cottage Vineyards (International) will also schedule media previews and tastings of the Domaine du Grangeon wines in the second week of February, 2009.

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About Domaine du Grangeon and Christophe Reynouard

Located in Balbiac in the commune of Rosières in the southernmost part of Ardèche , Domaine du Grangeon was created in 1998 after Christophe Reynouard took over the family-owned domaine from his father, after learning the craft of wine-making in the home of Viognier, i.e., Condrieu in northern Rhône, under the tutelage of Georges Vernay. Prior to his four-year post as oenologist at Vernay, Christophe had worked as a trainee in an Oenology Laboratory as an Oenology Advisor and had undertaken formal studies in wine-making, holding today a Bachelor of Science degree in Montpellier (France) in viticulture and oenology, a Master degree in Vineyard in Dijon (France), and a national degree in Oenology in Dijon (France).

Today, under the supervision of Christophe Reynouard, Domaine du Grangeon produces a large range of cuvées and varietal wines from the following grape varieties: Viognier, Chardonnay, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Carignan, and “Chatus”.

About m.a.x. concepts

m.a.x. concepts, a restaurant line of Maxim’s Group, has been diversifying its portfolio of characteristic restaurants since 1998. m.a.x. concepts believes a perfect dining experience comprises great food, pleasant ambience and attentive service; and they are indeed the fundamental of every m.a.x. concepts restaurant. The 25 restaurants deliver distinctive cuisines with innovative ideas - Western, Japanese, Vietnamese, Thai and international cuisine. m.a.x. concepts has also brought internationally renowned restaurant chain Lawry’s the Prime Rib to Hong Kong.

About LIAN

LIAN is a modern Vietnamese and Thai Bar & Bistro offering authentic Vietnamese &

Thai cuisine with modern & stylish presentation and a wide selection of beverages within a refined atmosphere. The menu consists of a blend of classic and modern Vietnamese and Thai cuisine which offer the unique authenticity in a stylish presentation, giving new light to its taste and visual stimulation. The modern menu encompasses inspirational use of Vietnamese and Thai ingredients and herbs.

The bar.

A cool and relaxing setting for after work drinks offering traditional thai lime martinis and vietnamese basil infused vodkas to sensational asian mocktails.

A bar snack menu featuring bite size Thai and Viet treats ideal for sharing, snacking pre or post movie, after work or for simple pure indulgence.

The bistro.

A destination for convenient lunch snacks, and casual and chic business lunches, sweet and savory afternoon delights and an evening of mouth watering Thai and Viet dishes. LIAN is a stylish and trendy restaurant while remaining simple and true to its menu.

About Cottage Vineyards (International)

Cottage Vineyards (International) Limited is a wine merchant established by wine lover, Ada Leung, with the mission of helping wine lovers in Hong Kong and Greater China “discover the wine world’s best kept secrets”. Specialized in the offerings of cool-climate wines produced by boutique wineries focused on creating and producing premium wines with unique characters, the company is the realization of Ms. Leung’s dream after her founding of Hong Kong-listed company, *Finet Holdings Limited* (*E-finet.com*) (HKEx: 8317), where as the company’s Chief Operating Officer, she helped devise and execute the business, marketing and Public Relations strategy which made the E-finet.com website Hong Kong’s leading financial portal.

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, HKU SPACE, PEAK, 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.

DISCOVERIES WINEMAKER TOUR

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON AT LIAN

WEDNESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2009

'SPICE ON SPICE' WINEMAKER DINNER MENU

APERITIF

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE FERMIGET 2005 (CHARDONNAY-VIOGNIER)

STARTER

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE FERMIGET 2005 (CHARDONNAY-VIOGNIER)

Soft Shell Crab & Avocado Rice Paper Rolls, Vegetarian Rice Paper Rolls and Vietnamese Spring Roll 軟殼蟹牛油果米紙卷・素米紙卷・越式春卷

SALAD

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON ROSE 2008 (GAMAY/CHATUS/CINSAULT/GRENACHE)

Grilled Scallop with Purple Shiso Shoot & Lemon Leaf 燒日本珍寶帶子

SOUP

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON SYRAH 2006

Duck Liver Ravioli with Vietnamese Beef Consommé 鴨肝雲吞・越式牛肉清湯

1ST ENTREE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON VIOGNIER 2006

Grilled Chilean Seabass in Green Curry 燒智利鱸魚青咖喱

2ND ENTREE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE BERGOUNOU 2006/2007

Char-grilled pork neck (*kor mu yang*) 炭燒豬頸肉

MAIN

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CHATUS 2005

Thai Penang Red Curry with Lamb Loin & Grilled Eggplant 泰香紅咖喱羊柳燒茄子

DESSERT

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE GRANGEON (VIN DE PAILLE VIOGNIER)

Soft Cheese Platter (3 types) & Dried Apricot with Walnuts 軟芝士配乾果

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE MON COEUR 2007 (VIN DE PAILLE GAMAY)

Warm Chocolate Pudding 暖心朱古力布甸

每位收費 HK\$598.00 NET per person

DISCOVERIES WINEMAKER TOUR
DOMAINE DU GRANGEON AT LAWRY'S THE PRIME RIB
THURSDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2009
'NEW CLASSICS' WINEMAKER DINNER MENU

APÉRITIF

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE FERMIGET 2005 (2/3 CHARDONNAY/1/3 VIOGNIER)

APPETIZER

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE SALABELLE 2007 (UGNI BLANC)

Jumbo Shrimp Cocktail 鮮大蝦咯嗲(2 pcs)

SALAD

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON ROSE 2008 (GAMAY/CHATUS/CINSAULT/GRENACHE)

The Famous Original Spinning Bowl Salad 冰旋翡翠沙律

SOUP

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON VIOGNIER 2006

Lobster Bisque 龍蝦濃湯

ENTREE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON SYRAH 2006

Roasted Prime Rib of Beef Au Jus – The Hong Kong Cut 香港切伴香滑薯蓉
With Mashed Potatoes and Gravy

MAIN

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CHATUS 2005

Grilled Baby Lamb Rack served with Potato, Aubergine Ratatouille and Thyme
Jus
扒幼嫩羊架伴普羅旺斯雜菜

DESSERT

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE GRANGEON (VIN DE PAILLE VIOGNIER)

Baked Alaska 焗阿拉斯加火焰雪山

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE MON COEUR 2007 (VIN DE PAILLE GAMAY)

Warm Chocolate Fantasy Cake 暖朱古力蛋糕

每位收費 HK\$598.00 NET per person

DISCOVERIES WINEMAKER TOUR

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON AT PEARL ON THE PEAK

28 FEBRUARY 2009

'ANCIENT GRAPES, ANCIENT TERROIR, TIMELESS WINES' TASTING SEMINAR

1ST COURSE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE SALABELLE 2007 (UGNI BLANC)

buffalo mozzarella cheese & smoked ham roll

意大利水牛芝士配煙火腿卷

2ND COURSE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON ROSÉ 2008

(80%GAMAY/5%CHATUS/5%CINSAULT/10%GRENAHCE)

grilled Italian zucchini with cherry tomato and balsamic vinegar `pearl`

炭燒意大利素菜配車厘茄伴黑醋珍珠

3RD COURSE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE GRANGEON (VIN DE PAILLE VIOGNIER)

foie gras with caramelised pear puree

法國鵝肝配焦糖啤梨醬

4TH COURSE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON VIOGNIER 2006

smoked yellow fin tuna with lobster mousse

煙燻吞拿魚配龍蝦忌廉凍

5TH COURSE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON SYRAH 2006

spicy duck tortellini

香料鴨肉意大利雲吞

6TH COURSE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE BERGOUIGNOU 2006

crispy fried meat ball

脆炸肉丸

7TH COURSE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CHATUS 2005

morroccan lamb skewer with eggplant and rosemary

摩洛哥香草羊肉串

8TH COURSE

DOMAINE DU GRANGEON CUVÉE MON COEUR 2007 (VIN DE PAILLE GAMAY)

handmade chocolate truffle

朱古力松露

每位收費 HK\$298.00 NET per person