

Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Marina Bay Sands' Wine Program takes center stage

*Sommeliers and exclusive wine label gain
international recognition*

Singapore (29 November, 2011) – Marina Bay Sands, Asia's leading destination for business, leisure and entertainment, has just added several feathers to its cap. Two sommeliers were presented accolades in recent national and regional competitions and will move on to Seoul in 2012 to compete with Asia and Oceania's best sommeliers. To top it off, an exclusive wine blend created especially by the Marina Bay Sands Food and Beverage (F&B) team, *Pirramimma Cabernet Petit Verdot 2007*, was awarded a silver medal at The International Wine Challenge 2011 held in London on 06 September 2011.

In the most recent Southeast Asia Best Sommelier Competition organized by the region's Sommelier Associations, two sommeliers from Marina Bay Sands clinched the top prizes, edging out 10 other contestants. db Bistro Moderne's Rajeshwaran Gopal was named Best Sommelier in Southeast Asia, while Alan Au from Osteria Mozza secured second place in the same competition. Earlier this year in the national level of the Best Sommelier Competition, Rajesh and Alan also won the title of Best Sommelier in Malaysia and Singapore respectively.

Osteria Mozza's Han Yew Kong, who participated in the national competition in Malaysia was also bestowed the title of "Most Knowledgeable Sommelier", as a recognition for his extensive knowledge on wines and spirits.

Mr. Tamir Shanel, Vice President of Food and Beverage Marina Bay Sands, said, "Marina Bay Sands offers a wide array of dining options for every palate. Our strong line-up of sommeliers, with their wealth of knowledge and experience, play an important role in providing an exceptional dining experience for our guests. We are proud to have such outstanding sommeliers on our team and their latest wins recognize their talent and passion. Combined with the accolades presented to *Pirramimma Cabernet Petit Verdot 2007*, we have once again reinforced our position as Asia's most spectacular dining destination."

Following their prestigious wins, Rajesh and Alan will be heading to Seoul in 2012 to pit their knowledge against top sommeliers from 12 Asia Pacific and Oceania nations.

“It’s a dream come true to be the winner of this competition. I learnt a lot from the whole experience and am honored to be able to represent Singapore,” said Mozza’s Alan. His peer Rajesh added: “This competition has equipped me with the necessary skills for the upcoming competitions and allowed me to further hone my skills and knowledge.”

Both Rajesh and Alan had to go through two rounds of grueling competitions that involved a series of theory tests, blind tastings and challenges that tested their wine service standards. There were two rounds of challenges before Rajesh clinched the coveted title while Alan emerged second.

Rajesh has 10 years of experience under his belt and working at db Bistro Moderne has given him the opportunity to work with some of the world’s most unique wines. He is currently preparing for one of the most trying exams in the world – the Master Sommelier exam, which he plans to take next November. With only 180 Master Sommeliers in the world, Rajesh aspires to be the first Asian to obtain this title. Rajesh is also one of the first in Asia to pass the rigorous Court of Master Sommelier’s Advanced Level Exam in London earlier this year. Alan had previously worked in several fine-dining restaurants in Taiwan and Singapore and honed his exceptional skills over a period of six years.

The jewel in the crown was the Silver Award bestowed on a wine bottled exclusively for Marina Bay Sands at the annual International Wine Challenge in London. For this prestigious challenge, more than 10,000 labels were submitted and a blind tasting was conducted by a panel of wine experts.

Marina Bay Sands’ exclusive wine, *Pirramimma Cabernet Petit Verdot 2007* was voted the Silver medal winner in its category. This unique label was created by one of the oldest wineries in Australia, Pirramimma, and the dark red wine boasts the aromas of black currant, violets and dark berries. The exclusive blend of Petit Verdot and Cabernet Sauvignon also has an outstanding length and depth together with smooth tannins. The wine was born during the pre-opening stages of Marina Bay Sands when a group of F&B professionals tested more than 100 wines in search of a signature house blend. The group created the *Cabernet Petit Verdot* blend in an aim to accentuate the complementing characters of the grape varieties.

In Australia, this wine was scored 94 out of 100 by the country’s leading wine critic, James Halliday, a well-known wine author with over 40 books and an annual wine guide under his belt. Known for his stringent criteria, James Halliday has given his mark of quality assurance for this label as he terms it “a very powerful and complex full-bodied wine”.

Marina Bay Sands also recently formed its own Sommelier Society providing a platform for expertise sharing, training and wine-tasting sessions. Wine Director, Alphonse Kaelbel, said, “This innovative society allows our team of wine connoisseurs to work with the best in the trade and enhance the service standards. We are able to source top vintages globally and increase the visibility of our wine program through exclusive vintner dinners and various events. With more than 3,000 wine labels in our cellar, Marina Bay Sands offers some of the world’s best wines for its increasingly sophisticated dining clientele.”

There are currently 12 members in the Society and it has already reached out to more than 400 F&B team members through training and coaching.

About Marina Bay Sands Pte Ltd

Marina Bay Sands is the leading business, leisure and entertainment destination in Asia. It features large and flexible convention and exhibition facilities, 2,560 hotel rooms and suites, the rooftop Sands SkyPark, the best shopping mall in Asia, world-class celebrity chef restaurants, a casino, Paiza Club for premium players and an outdoor event plaza. Its two theaters showcase a range of leading entertainment performances, including world renowned Broadway shows. Completing the line-up of attractions is the ArtScience Museum at Marina Bay Sands which plays host to permanent and marquee exhibitions. For more information, please visit www.marinabaysands.com.

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