

Speech by FS at Hong Kong International Wine & Spirits Fair 2019 opening ceremony (English only) (with photos/video)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at the opening ceremony of the Hong Kong International Wine & Spirits Fair 2019 this morning (November 7):

Peter (Chairman of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (TDC), Dr Peter Lam), Margaret (Executive Director of the TDC, Ms Margaret Fong), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, fellow wine lovers,

Good morning.

It is a pleasure to join you today for the opening ceremony of the 2019 Hong Kong International Wine & Spirits Fair.

Wine is one of life's indelible pleasures, and in so many ways: learning about it, buying it, drinking it, investing in it and, almost as satisfying, talking about it. At least this is the case for me.

The Hong Kong Trade Development Council knows that as well as anyone. After all, this is the 12th year in a row the TDC has organised this world-class event, at which a whole lot of buying and selling, talking and enjoying take place over three fruitful days and nights.

This year, this 12th Wine & Spirits Fair has attracted well over a thousand exhibitors from more than 20 countries and regions, East as well as West.

The number 12, by the way, symbolises completeness, perfection, in both Eastern and Western cultures.

Perfection, of course, is never entirely achieved but something we always strive toward. That said, this year's Wine & Spirits Fair is certainly a vintage edition.

Let me add that I'm very pleased to welcome Latvia, Lithuania, Vietnam and Ukraine to this fair for the first time.

I'm also delighted to see expanded country pavilions from the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, as well as Japan's JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization) pavilion.

And the French pavilion, the largest at this year's fair, counts some

200 exhibitors, including SGV Champagne, here with its three fine Champagne houses.

That the world pours into Hong Kong, each year, for this seminal event is a clear and compelling confirmation of Hong Kong's status as Asia's premier wine trading and distribution hub.

That status also reflects our zero wine duties, our world-class logistics network, and our long-standing experience in wine trading, and certainly also Hong Kong people's love for fine wine and good food.

No less important, it recognises our proximity and singular connections to the Mainland of China's vast consumer market.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you the best of business, and pleasure, at the Hong Kong International Wine & Spirits Fair. Thank you.



