



ProWein World: Background Feature / November 2018

ProWein World: The Gateway to the International Wine and Spirits Markets

A look back on five years of ProWine China & ProWine Asia

It's been five years since the inaugural edition of ProWine China in Shanghai. The success of that event laid the crucial groundwork for the establishment of a growing international network of satellite ProWein exhibitions. Each one conveys the essence and energy of the world's largest and most important trade fair for wine and spirits, tailored to accommodate the interests and sensibilities of each respective host nation. ProWine China alone has hosted roughly 4,000 exhibitors from 40 countries since its premiere, presenting to a crowd of 70,000 trade visitors. ProWine Asia in Singapore opened its door for the first time two years ago to an audience of 7,300 industry insiders and roughly 260 exhibitors. Positive feedback from that fair led to the first ProWine Asia in Hong Kong a year later, this time with 310 exhibitors and over 12,000 wine professionals in attendance. Since then ProWine Asia has rotated annually each spring between Singapore and Hong Kong. The three trade fairs complement each other optimally: ProWine Asia in Singapore addresses the Southeast Asian wine market, with 40 percent of visitors at the 2018 fair coming from outside Singapore and it's top five visitor markets Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. The Hong Kong version is similarly oriented on peripheral Asian markets. ProWine China by contrast is focused completely on the Chinese mainland market.



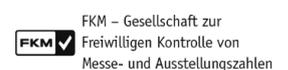
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The secret to achieving a successful blend

So much for the basic facts. Yet this success story is in many ways still in its infancy. The more interesting question: just how did its organizers formulate this remarkable international blend? "In a nutshell: We've exported the successful concept behind ProWine — as well as other fairs at Düsseldorf Messe — to relevant selling markets, but also tailored it to the laws and tastes of the respective nations," explains Michael Degen, Executive Director at Messe Düsseldorf GmbH. "From the start, the key to the success and development of ProWein in Düsseldorf has been our pursuit of an uncompromising industry-only trade fair concept. We've have never let that mission out of sight — however strong the temptation might have been in the early ProWein years to open up the fair to the general public." The statistics (74,194 exhibitors, 711,942 visitors and 843,427 square meters of net exhibition space in 25 years of ProWine) attest to the wisdom of that choice.



One essential component: The ProWein Education Campaign

"It may sound simple, but it was anything but," says Marius Berlemann, Global Head of Wine & Spirits and Director of ProWein. The 32 year old was well prepared to shepherd Messe Düsseldorf's entry into the Asian markets, having spent a semester abroad in Qingdao and then later working for the Messe for a year in Singapore. He and his colleagues from Messe Düsseldorf were tasked with finding local partners to help set up ProWine China as an annual trade show. "In the beginning we – and by that I primarily mean Josh Gu (Deputy Project Director) – spent a lot of time listening, to better understand the rules of the Chinese wine selling market. We understood that you can't simply apply the principles of



the German or western markets to China — it just won't work." He and Josh Gu traveled about the country, interviewing importers, wine schools, official wine associations and the industry media. They then worked through their insights together and developed a set of tools to help propel the trade fair, including the ProWein Education Campaign.

There have been challenges. For one, even the short five-year span between the first and the latest ProWine China has seen major changes to the selling market. One important driver is certainly the Chinese government's anti-corruption campaign, initiated in 2012. It led to a significant change in how wine is consumed in China, with both positive and negative impacts. Imports of international wines have been growing strongly, but there is no mistaking the situation: domestic wines dominate the landscape here. One thing has remained constant since the early years of ProWine China: there is a veritable and unquenchable thirst for wine knowledge and wine culture. This is why the supplementary professional program at both ProWine China and ProWine Asia, featuring tastings, master classes and seminars, have taken on major importance. The WSET (Wine & Spirit Education Trust) has been involved since the 2nd ProWine China. It will be on hand for all three days of the next ProWine China, offering a series of master classes. The industry forum is directed by Professor Li Demei, Professor of Oenology at the Beijing University of Agriculture and the veritable godfather of the Chinese wine scene. Tastings in the Champagne Lounge, the Decanter Asia Wine Awards and seminars on topics such as organic wine and craft beer are all part of the program.





"Our ProWein Education Campaign certainly has played a key role in the successful international development and establishment of the ProWein World brand — whether in China, Hong Kong or Singapore," Berlemann explains. "Our educational offerings serve as an excellent test balloon in determining which topics and projects are likely to find the greatest acceptance on the respective markets. Beyond that, finding the right mix of events is also naturally helpful in generating interest among the prospective audience — and drawing more visitors to our fairs."

Messe Düsseldorf Shanghai (MDS) has organized a series of national roadshows that harness that same dynamic and seek to further boost visitor numbers from mainland China. In the run-up to ProWine China 2018, 26 cities – including Beijing, Ningbo Shenzhen, Tianjin and Qingdao – hosted a series of 30 master classes and tastings organized by MDS. The spectrum of themes is as diverse as ProWine China itself: wines from Australia, Brazil, Chile, France and California have spots on the agenda, as do natural wines and marketing seminars. The concept has paid off: over 50 percent of attendees at the last ProWine China traveled from outside Shanghai.



Partners, Pairings & Prominent People

The three wine trade fairs have also raised their profile through partnerships with local food fairs. ProWine China, for example, has linked its site and schedule to China's most important trade fair for food, the FHC. The two ProWine Asia variants are run parallel to leading regional food fairs as well. In Hong Kong that is the HOFEX, while in Singapore it is the FHA Food & Beverage. The partner in all



three cases is the local subsidiary of UBM, one of the world's largest trade fair organizers. The potential synergies are clear: both events speak to identical audience demographics, right down to their complementary topics and products.

ProWine China hardly lacks for star power: Basketball superstar Yao Ming visited ProWine China in 2016 and participated directly in a master class featuring Yao Family wines. Sven-Göran Eriksson, the football trainer at FC Shenzhen, paid a visit – as did Brazilian football star Givanildo Vieira de Souza (better known as Hulk) to last year's ProWine China. The exhibitor list for this year's fair has some notable celebrity wattage as well: Château Miraval, a French estate owned by Hollywood actors Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, will be introducing itself to the Chinese market.



A wealth of inspirations from the southeast Asian wine market will also be presented at this year's ProWine Asia. The recent fair in Singapore provided a platform for several ambitious estates to raise their international profile, including Grover Zampa from India and prize-winning Siam Winery from Thailand as well as a local brewer: Brewlander & Co. which is a collaboration between local radio and TV celebrities Allan Wu and Daniel Ong and its head brewer, John Wei. Eddie McDougall, a well-known wine critic and the TV personality behind the series "The Flying Winemaker," attended ProWine Asia. ProWine Asia in Singapore also provided an optimal venue for the 30th national cocktail competition, conducted in cooperation with the local Association of Bartenders and Sommeliers (ABSS).



ProWein Düsseldorf & ProWein World

One might think that the success of ProWein World is a one-way flow from Europe to Asia. Nothing could be further from the truth! The international events in Asia actually end up boosting the event in Düsseldorf. "Our satellite events are reaching a previously untapped audience. For many of them, ProWine China or ProWine Asia (Singapore and Hong Kong) experience is their first real contact with the wider world of wine and spirits," Marius Berlemann notes. "This in turn leads them to discover the world's leading fair in the field, ProWein in Düsseldorf. We are always thrilled to greet those new faces here for their first trip as industry visitors." The promise inherent to ProWein World continues to gain momentum. In fact, some eyes are already turning to the next potential emerging market: the Indian sub-continent. Despite being home to 1.3 billion of the earth's inhabitants, India is still in its infancy when it comes to wine consumption. Yet the signs are clear that the market might well blossom. As a result, ProWein opted to initiate an education campaign at the first Food & Hotel India (FHI) fair in early September. The awareness-raising project was a rousing success.



There are positive trends from China as well: ProWine China started with a bang and that energy is still vital and strong five years in. Roughly 800 wine and spirits providers from 31 nations and winegrowing regions are expected to present to roughly 18,000 industry visitors at the 6th ProWine China. Australia, Germany, Italy and Spain have all once again raised their investment levels in the fair and wines from Azerbaijan, Canada and the Spanish region of Rioja will be appearing at ProWine China for the first time. ProWein



World continues to develop and evolve — as it has done so dynamically and successfully for the past five years.

More information available at:

www.prowein-world.com; www.prowinechina.com;
www.singapore.prowineasia.com; www.hongkong.prowineasia.com

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