

The underground  
storage facilities of  
Crown Wine Cellars

Crown Wine Cellars  
設於地庫的酒窖

# TOP GLASS

## 瓊漿玉液

TEXT/文 ROBIN LYNAM

**A zero-tax policy has helped Hong Kong's wine trade to become the toast of Asia**

自從葡萄酒零關稅政策實施之後，香港有望成為亞洲的葡萄酒貿易中心

**T**HE EFFECTS OF the removal of Hong Kong's wine tax last year were dramatic and immediate. In the following 10 months, 10 major wine auctions were held, wine imports rose by 80 percent and Hong Kong was well on the way to becoming "Asia's wine hub".

"Hong Kong is the first free wine port among major economies with unparalleled connectivity in Asia," said then Financial Secretary John Tsang in May. "We are one of the world's fastest-growing markets for wine and we aim to be one of the world's great wine trading and distribution centres. From March to December 2008, Hong Kong's global wine imports increased more than 80 per cent year-on-year to the tune of some US\$350 million."

In the past 15 years, Hong Kong's wine policy has been erratic, to say the least. Before 1994, there was a fixed rate of HK\$34 a litre on wine plus a duty of 20 percent of the value. In 1994, an *ad valorem* – or according to value – duty was imposed at 90 percent, which by 2007 had been cut to 40 percent.

The elimination of all duties in February 2008 made Hong Kong Asia's only city with neither wine duty nor sales and consumption taxes.

Major international names that held auctions in the months after the changes included Bonhams, Christie's, Sotheby's, Acker Merrall & Condit and Zachys Wine &

**香**港政府於去年取消葡萄酒關稅，取得了立竿見影的成效。在撤消關稅十個月之內，香港已經舉辦了十個大型的葡萄酒拍賣會，入口總值增加了八成；顯示香港正逐漸成為「亞洲的葡萄酒貿易中心」。

今年5月，財政司司長曾俊華表示：「香港是首個豁免葡萄酒稅的主要經濟體系，由於我們同時在亞洲擁有獨一無二的貿易網絡，所以成為全球發展最快速的葡萄酒市場之一，並以成為世界最大的葡萄酒貿易及集散中心為目標。從2008年3月至12月，香港自全球入口的葡萄酒總值，與上年度相比增加了八成，達到約3.5億美元。」

在過去15年來，香港的葡萄酒政策可說是飄忽不定。在1994年之前，政府對每公升葡萄酒徵稅34港元，再按價值徵收20%的關稅，1994年則改為徵收90%的從價稅（即以入口價計算稅款），於2007年這項稅率便下調至40%。

**Savouring the bouquet at the Hong Kong International Wine Fair**

香港國際美酒展為劉伶提供品嚐各國佳釀的機會







**Ermitage 1998 sold by Acker Merrall & Condit**  
**於Acker Merrall & Condit拍賣會上售出的**  
**Ermitage 1998佳釀**

Liquor. Acker Merrall & Condit held two sales in Hong Kong in 2008 and has organised four this year, the final one scheduled for November 7. Its 30 May auction realized HK\$37.5 million, including a HK\$532,400 for six bottles of rare 1985 Henri Jayer Richebourg Burgundy. A case of magnums of 1989 Haut Brion Bordeaux fetched HK\$193,600.

"Hong Kong has certainly led the way in demand on the Bordeaux side," says Acker Merrall & Condit's President and Auction Director John Kapon. "Also, a lot of Hong Kong buyers are buying in the New York sales, and some Americans have been buying in the Hong Kong sales as well."

While Hong Kong wine lovers are known for their enthusiasm for Bordeaux, the government is keen to broaden the local market. The government has recently signed a Memoranda of Understanding on wine with France, Spain, Australia and Italy, and further agreements are pending, all designed to encourage the development of wine-related businesses in the trading, retail, logistics, and storage sectors.

Vinexpo, the world's most prestigious trade-only wine fair, chose the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre as the venue for Vinexpo Asia Pacific 2008 and will return in May next year. The Hong Kong Trade Development Council held the inaugural Hong Kong International

政府於2008年2月取消全部的葡萄酒關稅，令香港成為亞洲唯一一個不徵收葡萄酒關稅和消費稅的城市。

取消葡萄酒關稅之後，香港隨即吸引Bonhams、佳士得、蘇富比、Acker Merrall & Condit和Zachys Wine & Liquor等國際知名公司來港舉行葡萄酒拍賣會。Acker Merrall & Condit於2008年在本地舉辦了兩次拍賣會，今年則會舉辦四次，最後一次定於11月7日舉行。該公司在5月30日舉行的拍賣會，成交總額達3,750萬港元，包括以532,400港元成交的六瓶1985年的珍藏Henri Jayer Richebourg Burgundy。此外，一箱大酒瓶裝的1989年Haut Brion Bordeaux，亦以193,600港元售出。

Acker Merrall & Condit的總裁兼拍賣總監John Kapon說：「香港對波爾多葡萄酒的需求，肯定領先同儕。此外，很多香港買家會在紐約的拍賣會上購入名釀，而一些美國買家則會在香港的拍賣會上競投心儀的佳釀。」

香港的愛酒人士一向對波爾多葡萄酒情有獨鍾，但政府正致力擴大本土市場及消費者的口味。政府最近與法國、西班牙、澳洲和意大利簽訂了葡萄酒相關業務合作諒解備忘錄，並正在洽商進一步的協議。這些措施的目標是推動發展與葡萄酒相關的業務，包括貿易、零售、物流運輸以及庫存等。

Vinexpo是全球葡萄酒業內地位最崇高的葡萄酒交易會，而且只限業界人士參加，主辦單位選擇在香港會議展覽中心舉辦Vinexpo Asia Pacific 2008，並將於2010年5月重臨香江。此外，香港貿易發展局在2008年8月舉辦首屆香港國際美酒展，第二屆則將於今年的11月4至6日舉行。

Crown Wine Cellars的Concept Founder暨總經理





Some 240 exhibitors showcased products at the 2008 Hong Kong International Wine Fair (left)

約有240名參展商在2008年香港國際美酒展中羅列其佳釀（左圖）

Checking the nose at Vinexpo Asia-Pacific (above)

業界人士在Vinexpo Asia-Pacific交易會中細味酒香（上圖）

A case of Romanée-Conti 1990 goes under the hammer at an auction by Acker Merrall & Condit (above, right)

在Acker Merrall & Condit的拍賣會上，賣家爭相競投一箱1990年的Romanée-Conti（右上圖）

Wine Fair in August 2008 and will hold the second from 4 to 6 November this year.

"It [the zero-tax rate] has been incredibly beneficial to the free trade of wine in Hong Kong, the increase in all aspects of wine-related businesses and the solidification of Hong Kong as the fine- and rare-wine trading centre of Asia," says Greg De'eb, Concept Founder and General Manager of Crown Wine Cellars.

"Crown Wine Cellars' business has grown substantially in the past 24 months with a 200 percent growth in cellar space – about to become 500 percent after Crown Wine Cellars 4 is opened – more than double the staff count and treble the vehicle count."

Berry Bros. & Rudd has also enjoyed healthy growth in its business. The company has been in the wine trade since 1698 when it was established in St James's Street, London, the city still regarded as the wine hub of Europe and a role model for Hong Kong.

"The zero tax has been beneficial to the wine trade, but more importantly it has also been beneficial to the consumer," says Nicholas Pegna, Berry Bros. & Rudd Hong Kong's Managing Director. "We have seen a desire for wines from Burgundy grow – the lines of Burgundy that we carry in our Hong Kong Lee Gardens shop now almost equals the number of Bordeaux wines that we stock – as well as our range of New World wines increasing to meet demand. Our Fine Wine School, established in 2008, is going from strength to strength. It is extremely exciting to watch as the interest in fine wine grows and diversifies."

Although Pegna is more cautious in his assessment of Hong Kong's future as a wine hub, he agrees it is now the regional focus of the fine-wine trade.

Patricio de la Fuente Saez, Managing Director of wine and spirits distributor Links Concept, says his Hong Kong sales have risen by more than 20 percent since the tax was removed.

Greg De'eb指出：「零關稅對促進香港的葡萄酒自由貿易、葡萄酒相關業務的整體增長，以及鞏固香港作為優質葡萄酒亞洲貿易中心的地位，均十分有利。」

他補充說：「Crown Wine Cellars的業務在過去24個月有顯著的增長，我們的酒窖空間增加了兩倍；在第四號酒窖啟用後，儲存空間更會擴充五倍。此外，職員人數也上升了超過一倍，貨車數目更增多了三倍。」

Berry Bros. & Rudd在香港的業務增長也非常理想。這家公司於1698年在倫敦St James's Street開業，從事葡萄酒貿易。直到今天，倫敦依然被視為歐洲的葡萄酒貿易中心，也是香港效法的對象。

Berry Bros. & Rudd Hong Kong的董事總經理Nicholas Pegna指出：「零關稅固然能促進葡萄酒貿易，更重要的是，它對消費者亦相當有利。我們注意到本地對李根地葡萄酒的需求殷切，目前我們在香港利園門市的選擇，幾乎與我們的波爾多葡萄酒相約。為應付需求，我們亦增加了來自新世界的葡萄酒種類。此外，我們於2008年成立的香港品酒學校亦廣受歡迎。我們欣然看到人們愈來愈欣賞優質的葡萄酒，口味亦更多元化。」

儘管Pegna對香港成為「葡萄酒貿易中心」的前景有所保留，但他同意香港目前是亞洲區優質葡萄酒貿易重鎮。

葡萄酒和烈酒經銷商靈思概念的董事總經理Patricio de la

John Kapon, President & Auction Director of Acker Merrall & Condit

Acker Merrall & Condit的總裁兼拍賣總監 John Kapon



## WINE 醇酒佳釀

“When we look at the big picture it has been a very good promotional tool for Hong Kong,” says Saez. “Most top hotels in Hong Kong now have top sommeliers who have worked at some of the best restaurants in the world and are now putting together amazing wine lists. As far as getting wines goes, I don’t think there is anything that is not available in Hong Kong.”

Securing Hong Kong’s future as a centre for the international wine trade is now a high priority for the government and organisations such as the Hong Kong Tourism Board and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. In otherwise distinctly bearish times the mood in the Hong Kong wine trade is definitely bullish.

De’eb says indirect taxes – or tax revenue generated from successful wine businesses rather than directly through import duty – that companies such as Crown Wine Cellars are paying have a definite and direct impact on the economy, especially in this time of downturn and high unemployment. “Add to this our very real and acknowledged status as the rare and fine wine capital of Asia and I believe that we have many good years ahead of us. At the last count London managed 400 or so.”



**Berry Bros. & Rudd dates back more than 300 years in the UK (above)**

**Berry Bros. & Rudd在英國已有逾300多年的歷史(上圖)**

**Henri Jayer Richebourg 1985 Burgundy**

**1985年的Henri Jayer Richebourg Burgundy**

Fuente Saez說，自從取消關稅後，公司在香港的營業額增加了超過兩成。

Saez說：「從大局來看，取消葡萄酒關稅是上佳的推廣手法。現時香港大部分酒店所聘用的侍酒師都曾在世界著名的餐廳工作，酒單上亦有許多出色的佳釀。在購買葡萄酒方面，我想在香港應該沒有買不到的酒。」

香港政府聯同旅發局與貿發局等有關機構，以鞏固香港為國際葡萄酒貿易中心為首要任務，而在社會環境不景氣的現狀下，香港的葡萄酒貿易卻正在蓬勃發展當中。

**Greg De’eb指出，政府間接地向酒商徵收的稅款（即是向Crown Wine Cellars等成功酒商徵收稅項，而非通過關稅徵收稅金），對經濟有明顯且直接的影響，特別是在經濟衰退及失業率高企的時候。他說：「香港更是公認的亞洲名酒貿易之都，我相信這裏的葡萄酒市場會繼續興旺，就跟倫敦一樣，那裡的葡萄酒市道持續暢旺了400多年。」**

## WINE ON THE SIDE 美酒紛陳

**W**ine-related services are a growing sector in Hong Kong, ranging from fine-wine storage to wine education courses. These companies are among the leaders.

### CROWN WINE CELLARS

Hong Kong’s leading wine-storage specialist. Facilities include underground temperature- and humidity-controlled cellars that shield fine wine from light and vibration. Its services are used by the trade and collectors.

+852 2580 6287

[www.crownwinecellars.com](http://www.crownwinecellars.com)

### THE FINE WINE SCHOOL

Operated by wine merchants Berry Bros. & Rudd, the Fine Wine School offers wine appreciation tuition from beginner level up, including courses accredited by the Wine & Spirits Education Trust leading to advanced and intermediate certificates.

The school also organises wine events.

+852 2585 6004, [www.bbr.com](http://www.bbr.com)

### PLATINUM WINES

A wine trading company and consultancy service providing advice and purchasing assistance to collectors seeking to build private cellars of investment-quality wines. It specialises in affording buyers access to lesser-known, high-end producers that often make only limited quantities of wine.

+852 2537 1696

[www.platinum-wines.com](http://www.platinum-wines.com)

**在**香港，葡萄酒的相關服務業正在持續發展，包括葡萄酒儲存服務及品酒課程等多項服務。以下為你介紹香港多個出色的葡萄酒服務供應商。

### CROWN WINE CELLARS

香港頂尖的葡萄酒儲存專家，設於地庫的恆溫酒窖，亦可以妥善控制濕度，確保佳釀不受光線和震動而影響酒質。服務的對象包括業界和收藏家。

服務對象包括業界和收藏家。

+852 2580 6287

[www.crownwinecellars.com](http://www.crownwinecellars.com)

### THE FINE WINE SCHOOL

由葡萄酒商Berry Bros. & Rudd經營的品酒學校，提供各式品酒課程，包括入門班及經英國Wine & Spirits Education Trust認可的中級至高級文憑課程。學校亦會組織各種品酒活動。

+852 2585 6004, [www.bbr.com](http://www.bbr.com)

### PLATINUM WINES

這是一家提供顧問服務的葡萄酒貿易公司，專替想建立私人酒窖的葡萄酒收藏家提供意見，並協助他們購買具投資價值的葡萄酒。公司的專長是協助買家透過特定管道購入知名度較低、產量有限的高級葡萄酒。

+852 2537 1696

[www.platinum-wines.com](http://www.platinum-wines.com)

