

Le Pan magazine explores wine industry with focus on Chinese consumption

Posted By [Jen King](#) On March 31, 2015 @ 3:30 am In [Featured,Food and beverage,Industry sectors,Marketing,Media/publishing,News,Print](#) | [No Comments](#)



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Image from Le Pan's Instagram

Le Pan, a new international magazine and Web site, is aiming to redefine coverage of the fine wine industry with an emphasis on modern-day fine living.

Published by Hong Kong-based publisher LPM Communications Limited, the imprint, lead by publisher and CEO Jeannie Cho Lee, the first Asian Master of Wine, will have a wine to lifestyle ratio of 80:20 when launched this summer. Its origin and connection to the Asian market is a reflection of the region's growing interest in fine wine and luxury goods.

"We are the first truly international publication to emerge out of Hong Kong, China to target, not just regional or domestic readers but a global, globe-trotting audience," said publisher and CEO of [Le Pan](#) ^[2], Hong Kong. "We understand and appreciate that for those who travel, enjoy fine wine and great food, the world is becoming a smaller place.

"Our readers travel the world and we travel the world for them, discovering and seeking the very best in a fine wine lifestyle," she said. "We are truly global with our editors based around the world and we work with the best in the business, wherever they may be based."

Cellar reads

Published monthly, the large-format Le Pan will average more than 200 pages and will cover the wine industry through interviews and tastings along lifestyle coverage. Although the main focus of the magazine's content will focus on wines, La Pan will also feature articles on readers' "passions in life," such as food, art, fashion, design, automotives, watches and travel to celebrate the "accoutrements of modern-day fine living."

In terms of wine coverage, Le Pan's experts will cover all the major wine producing regions and review an array of rare wines not available to publications in the space. Le Pan is also the only consumer-facing wine imprint to have six Masters of Wine and renowned wine professionals on editorial.

"At the high end of the Chinese consumer market, wine (especially French wine) is becoming one of the ultimate status symbols," said Brian Buchwald, chief executive officer at [Bomod](#) ^[3], New York. "It connotes wealth, sophistication, and aesthetic understanding in a manner that the wealthy find appealing.

"Jeannie Cho Lee has a long history of championing the Asian experience in the context of fine dining and wine. She's been acknowledged for some time as the leading local voice in the space," he said. "So she, in and of herself, brings credibility. Yet it's been noted in many categories that 'localizing' for the Asian consumer can sometimes backfire.

"As their travels and the Internet facilitate information back from Europe, Northern California and other wine growing regions, Chinese consumers do not want to be force fed. They want to understand and experience what their peers in France and Italy are consuming and enjoying. So if this new endeavor proves successful in International markets it will likely prove successful in China. Yet if it doesn't it likely will die on the vine."

Ms. Cho Lee described the magazine in a statement as being "international, educated, sophisticated and assured. [Le Pan] will curate the world's great wines, rare experiences and sumptuous wares into a monthly reference on 'The Art of Fine Wine Living'"



[4]

Jeannie Cho Lee, publisher/CEO of Le Pan

Given Le Pan's Hong Kong base, the publication is in an ideal location to cover the international world of wine and luxury, as well as tap into Chinese sentiment simultaneously. With China becoming the largest consumer market for wine and luxury goods, Le Pan's positioning and location will likely benefit its advertising partners looking to extend their reach into the Asian marketplace.

"[Le Pan is] absolutely a response to the growing interest in fine wine. Hong Kong is the fine wine hub of Asia and the interest in wine is moving mass market with even convenience stores like 711 offering a good selection of wine," Ms. Cho Lee said. "We are the only international city to be duty-free for wine and this has really accelerated the growth and interest in wine."

"We are not only a logistics wine hub but also a wine auction hub where sales of fine wine surpasses London and in some years even New York," she said. "The future growth of fine wine is in Asia, specifically China and we wine lovers are thirsty for education and information – we are here to answer that demand."

At its launch at the Vinexpo 2015 in Bordeaux, France, June 15, Le Pan will be available in both English and Chinese. Additional launch parties will follow in elsewhere in Europe, North America and Asia.

International editions of Le Pan will reach 35 world cities, with initial distribution in the United States, including New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Napa, CA, as well as Europe and Asia Pacific cities such as London, Paris, Milan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Sydney and Melbourne, Australia.

Le Pan will be available from major booksellers, business and first class airport lounges, hotels, wine boutiques and select newsstands.

For Chinese readers, the edition will be translated to Simplified Chinese and mirrors the international version, but will include unique content that will supply the audience with unprecedented coverage into wine and lifestyle in China. Le Pan will be available in 22 Chinese cities.

Le Pan will also have a strong digital presence through its Web site LaPanMedia.com. The site will be the first in the spirits space to offer a bilingual wine database with ratings and reviews of more than 10,000 fine wines.



Le Pan Media's Web site

Content on the site will also include weekly tastings conducted by experts dedicated to finding the rising stars of each wine-producing region.

Available in both Chinese and English, the Web site will bring readers breaking industry news, trends and tips for food and wine pairings as well as lifestyle content not featured in the print edition.

To increase exposure for the magazine's June launch, LaPanMedia.com will host exclusive multimedia coverage of the Bordeaux En Primeur week in France March 30 to April 2.

Content will include behind-the-scenes reports, interviews, reviews and tasting notes to be posted on a dedicated Web page in English and Chinese. The publication will also interact with readers through real-time updates streamed through Le Pan's Twitter and Instagram accounts.

"Print is still important and we want our readers to understand that we take our editorial seriously enough to have it printed and lingering around on a coffee table for years," Le Pan's Ms. Cho Lee said. "We believe in the quality of our writing, our presentation and the importance of touch and feel."

"We are modern, looking to the future, but firmly rooted in traditions that we believe in and one of them is print," she said.

Uncorking Asia

Whiskey has also seen a surge in popularity in Asia. For instance, Scotch whisky-maker Johnnie Walker is aiming to increase digital interactions with wealthy spirits drinkers through the introduction of "Johnnie Walker House — World of Privileges."

Johnnie Walker House is a series of stand alone and airport boutiques dedicated to the whiskies distilled by Johnnie Walker. Located mainly in Asia, the Johnnie Walker Houses are designed to inform consumers about the brand's products, while the new digital component will serve as a membership rewards program ([see story](#) ^[6]).

Overall, retail for spirits is also on the upswing. For instance, spirits-makers under the umbrella of luxury conglomerate Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy took a similar approach by joining together for a sensory experience in Paris' Charles de Gaulle Airport.

For the first time, Moët Hennessy's Champagne and cognac houses are showcased in a single boutique as travelers make their way through terminal 2E Gate K. Opened since September, the Les Caves Particulières creates a prime shopping opportunity for travelers boarding flights on their way to visit loved ones for the holiday season ([see story](#) ^[7]).

Like with any new venture, Le Pan's success will be based on market interest and need.

"I believe the high end consumer will definitely be interested in experimenting with the title," Bomoda's Mr. Buchwald said. "However durability will only come from an excellent product that reaches respectability globally."

Final Take

Jen King, lead reporter on *Luxury Daily*, New York



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[2] Le Pan: <http://www.lepanmedia.com>

[3] Bomoda: <http://www.bomodagroup.com/>

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[6] see story: <http://www.luxurydaily.com/johnnie-walker-targets-asian-consumers-via-retail-outposts-branded-content/>

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