



## HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL WINE AND SPIRITS 9<sup>TH</sup> – 11<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2017

As a gateway to the Asian market for wine and spirits, Hong Kong presents itself as a hub nesting overseas representations, buying houses and traders with its largest re-export destinations being Mainland China and Macau. The Hong Kong market presents full of market opportunities and big export potential for rum and spirits especially with the increasing number of tourist visiting the country. According to Spirits Business (2017), the Asia Pacific market is featured as an amorphous beast representing 60% of world's population – the region representing one-third of alcohol consumption globally. Its rapidly emerging middle-class, fresh trends for alcoholic consumption, youngsters wishing to taste new products as well as growth of high net worth individuals have captivated luxury segment spirits group. As younger consumers become ever more crucial to the success of spirits brands in Asia Pacific, so too does the region's burgeoning on-trade channel.

Domestic exports of the spirit sector have witnessed a significant growth of 233% over the past five years, increasing from Rs 34.3 million in 2012 to Rs 114.2 million in 2016. Rum occupies the largest share of 87% followed by other spirits and liquors. Exports of spirits to Asia Pacific registered its peak of Rs. 3.5 M in 2015 to drop to Rs. 716,000 in 2016.



Enterprise Mauritius led a delegation of 7 companies from the spirits sector to showcase their products in the **10<sup>th</sup> edition of the Hong Kong International Wine and Spirits fair (HKIWSF)** held at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre from 9 to 11 November 2017. This event saw a total of 1,070 exhibitors from about 40 countries to showcase wine and spirits. Nearly 20,000 trade buyers from 70 countries attended the fair. This included the Chinese mainland, Malaysia, Vietnam, France, the US, Australia and China. The **first participation** to HKIWSF 2017 has been a unique experience for rum producers to present to rum lovers the story behind their rums – be it agricultural or molasses rum - through masterclasses.

Mauritius is among the rare countries producing both agricultural and molasses rum. While agricultural rum is made from pure sugarcane juice, molasses based rum is also known as traditional rum produced from molasses, a by-product of sugar. Three distilleries in Mauritius namely Rhumerie de Chamarel, Distillerie de Laboudonnais and St Aubin are presently producing agricultural rum. However, Grays and Medine are the only distilleries producing traditional rum. Furthermore, there are several Master-blenders in Mauritius who conceive a wide panoply of white, gold, spiced and aged rum using 93% alcohol rum.

Six rum companies namely Grays, Litchquor, Oxenham, Stirling Export House, Blue Mauritius and

Chamarel as well as La Joliette winery which produces tropical fruit wines participated in the fair. This show gave an opportunity for the exhibitors to not only showcase new releases to distributors but also meet with prospective and existing partners. They leveraged on this platform to take stock of new products on the market as well as their packaging and labeling. Concerted marketing efforts since last year in Vinexpo Hong Kong 2016 and SIAL Shanghai 2017 have been beneficial to Mauritian participants given that it gives the opportunity to reinforce business ties with the buyers from the region. This event enabled meetings with rum journalist, Master-blenders, trade representations in Hong Kong, Rum Ambassadors and connoisseurs.

Rum connoisseurs perceive rum to be one of the most exciting spirits categories as it can be blended, flavoured and matured according to the needs and tastes of drinkers. In this respect, EM hosted an ice-bar with the collaboration of the Honi Honi bar, Hong Kong to demonstrate to visitors templates of 'tiki' cocktails that can be prepared using similar type of rums.





gathered, visibility garnered as well as promising orders secured. The overall response from participants was very good in terms of the visibility acquired, quality of buyers met, prospective orders and good market potential.

The first participation of Mauritian rum companies to this event has been very meaningful and successful in terms of contacts established, knowledge

