

In this special feature, we present two Special Award winners from WINE&DINE Singapore's Top Restaurants 2015. They beat some 400 restaurants island-wide to be recognised as the *crème de la crème* of the industry.

*Wine List Award (Gold)*

## COMPLEMENTING FRENCH FLAVOURS

General manager Julien Brockers shares some of the thinking behind Saint Pierre's formidable inventory of wines.



**Is the predominance of French wines here due to the cuisine served at the restaurant or the sommelier's preference?**

Our wine list is designed to match our French cuisine and appeal to our guests, who have always shown a preference for French quaffs since we opened in 2000. But of course, since my team and I are French, we have a soft spot for wines from Côtes du Rhône and Burgundy.

**Do you structure your wine list according to flavours spectrums first or by regions and appellations?**

The wine list is divided by regions and appellations then further listed by vintage and producer. This arrangement is easier for guests to go through, given the extensiveness of our list.



**How do you ensure that the wines on the list match chef Emmanuel Stroobant's cuisine?**

Chef Stroobant flavours his dishes in a natural way—the essences derived from natural ingredients are used as stocks, base, and seasonings. As long as the dish's flavours are precise, the sommelier is able to pair big red or white wines with Stroobant's cuisine. For instance, the current menu has a dish made of caramelised onions and comte cheese called Onion, Vieux Comte Cheese, Grapefruit—its bold flavours pair well with an aged Syrah which is fruity and has a slightly strong earthy flavour.

**How does the sommelier-chef relationship work?**

It has to work both ways. We believe that a bad wine pairing can potentially ruin the taste of both the food and wine so it is important that both chef and sommelier work hand in hand at all times.

**How are the wine pairings for your tasting menus done?**

The menu is created with flavour building in mind, from the lightest to the strongest. So is the wine pairing—from a white like a Chardonnay to a light red like Gamay or a young Burgundy.

**What would you consider to be the crown jewel in your wine cellar?**

The Hommage a Jacques Perrin 2005 because it was the first *grand vin* I tried so I have a special affection for the winemaker. In addition, I adore Mourvedre grapes. 2005 is also the best vintage in Rhône Valley, and the fact that I was born less than 50 km away from Châteauneuf-du-Pape adds to the magic.