

# the drinks business

## UNCORKED: SAM LAU

11th October, 2016 by Lucy Jenkins

Sam Lau, the beverage director of the newly opened Skye bar and restaurant perched atop Hong Kong's Park Lane Hotel, broke numerous cultural and language barriers and joined the team at the two Michelin starred Le Cinq at George V Four Seasons Hotel in Paris to become the first Chinese sommelier. He then returned to Hong Kong to work at Caprice at the Four Seasons just as it gained its third Michelin star. Lau speaks to *dbHK* about dining with Hans Astrom and the first bottle he fell in love with in Burgundy.



### What vintage are you?

1979. Unfortunately, it's not that easy to find a good wine from then!

### What bottle sparked your love of wine?

This is one of my favourite memories. Many years ago when I was working at Le Cinq restaurant in Paris, Eric Beaumard, the director and sommelier, took me under his wing and invited me to Burgundy. The first bottle I had was a Domaine Coche-Dury Les Perrieres 2007. I'll never ever forget it. It opened my eyes to one of the best wine regions in the world.

### What would you be as a wine?

Anything from Burgundy. I love the delicate, elegant styles. I'm not flashy so maybe I'd pick somewhere without a big production. Maybe something like *Le Clos Blanc de Vougeot* from *Domaine de la Vougeraie* in Premeaux, just south of Nuits St Georges.

### Biggest vice?

Wine. All forms of it. I especially have a weakness for South African wine ever since I was able to stay at Klein Constantia for two nights and have dinner with Hans Astrom. This is another unforgettable and unusual experience that I count myself lucky for having.

### Where are you happiest?

In the restaurant, speaking to customers and finding out what wines they like.

### Best advice you ever got?

Beaumard once told me that in a restaurant, you always need to be professional and be prepared. Keep improving and always expand your knowledge and tasting.