

**SPEECH BY SMS SIM ANN,
SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRADE & INDUSTRY AT THE
INAUGURAL SPECIALITY & FINE FOOD ASIA (SFFA) AND
RESTAURANT, PUB & BAR ASIA (RPBA) ON TUESDAY, 18 JULY 2017,
9.45AM AT SUNTEC CONVENTION CENTRE**

Mr Damion Angus, Managing Director of Montgomery

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

A very good morning,

1. It is my pleasure to join you at the inaugural edition of both the Speciality & Fine Food Asia (SFFA) and Restaurant Pub & Bar Asia (RPBA) 2017.

2. Montgomery is well known as the organizer of the Speciality and Fine Food Fair in London. The London show is the UK's largest speciality food trade event which welcomes 12,000 trade attendees every year. My heartiest congratulations go to Montgomery for successfully organising their first speciality and fine food fair in Asia. And I am happy that they chose to do so in Singapore.

Growth opportunities in Southeast Asia

3. Southeast Asia, with its combined population of 625 million people and GDP of US\$7.6 trillion, presents an attractive market for companies in the food and beverages trade. The speciality food and drinks industry is one segment that is rapidly gaining traction in the region, with a projected annual growth rate of 7% over the next 5 years.

4. With growing incomes and increasing exposure to international markets, consumers in the region are demanding more speciality and artisanal food products. There is also greater interest in consuming from sustainable food sources and focus on health and wellness. These trends show that consumers in Southeast Asia are increasingly willing to spend more on quality and premium food products.

5. Beyond food products, the bar scene in Southeast Asia has also experienced good growth and is evolving rapidly. In 2016, 19 Southeast Asian bars made it to the list of Asia's 50 Best Bars. This year, 23 Southeast Asian bars were featured on the list, including Singapore's own Manhattan, 28 Hong Kong Street and Operation Dagger, which were ranked 1st, 4th and 6th respectively.

6. With our renowned dining and entertainment scene, well-established links to the region and world-class MICE facilities, Singapore is an ideal location for exhibitors and distributors to tap on the growing regional demand for

premium food products. We look forward to welcoming more food events to Singapore.

One-stop platform for trade visitors to procure, exchange ideas and network

7. The SFFA and RPBA shows that Montgomery has organized today are important additions to Singapore's line-up of F&B industry events. They are currently the only dedicated B2B events in Asia to provide a one-stop platform for seamless sourcing of artisanal produce and brands from around the world. International retailers, wholesalers and F&B service providers can choose from a wide range of products from gourmet foods and beverages to premium kitchen and catering equipment.

8. I am excited that Montgomery has brought in over 140 exhibitors from more than 20 countries to the fairs today, some of which are Singapore's home-grown brands. For instance, Straits Preserves produces marmalade of unique flavours, such as the Ginger Garden marmalade which won the Gold award at The World's Original Marmalade Awards 2017. Also exhibiting at SFFA is the Ette Tea Company, which produces unique tea blends inspired by Singapore's food flavours, such as chicken rice- or nasi lemak- flavoured tea. Among the products featured at the exhibition, 200 are award-winning internationally-sourced products, and you will be the first in the region to try them.

9. Do take advantage of this platform to keep pace with the latest trends, exchange ideas and conduct market testing by obtaining first-hand feedback from the other trade attendees who have come from all around the world. This is an ideal platform for you to network and discover new collaborations with the many exhibitors present.

Innovative events highlights

10. I am also pleased to note that Montgomery has introduced innovative elements to these shows which aim to help businesses, particularly Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), adapt to meet changing consumer needs.

11. At the *Business Mentoring Area*, trade visitors can meet with SME experts that offer one-on-one consultations on a wide range of topics. These range from F&B start-up issues, menu development, marketing, and expansion to international markets. Visitors and SMEs can leverage on the session to learn about branding and expansion opportunities.

12. The *Start-Up Village* is a dedicated section showcasing start-up companies who make artisanal food products. Visitors can discover creative brands and explore collaborations with these up-and-coming artisanal food and drinks producers.

13. I encourage you to make full use of these sessions to gain insights on capturing food trends and innovating to stay at the forefront of the F&B industry.

Singapore's vibrant and diverse dining landscape

14. SFFA and RPBA attendees would be happy to know that the shows coincide with the two-week long Singapore Food Festival (SFF) organised by the Singapore Tourism Board. The SFF is an annual series of events that showcase traditional and contemporary Singaporean flavours in celebration of our food heritage and culinary traditions.

15. This is a great opportunity for you to enjoy distinctively Singaporean flavours at the various events being held all over the city. One of these events is the *Hawker Wine Safari*, where you can enjoy artisanal wines paired with hawker dishes from stalls including some of Singapore's 2017 Michelin Bib Gourmand awardees. For another experience only available in this region, you can join the *Heritage Town Festival's Heritage Town Trail* held in the Katong-Joo Chiat neighbourhood. On the food trail, you can enjoy authentic Peranakan food, which blends Chinese ingredients with Malay and Indonesian spices and cooking techniques to create unique flavour profiles, while learning more about Peranakan culture.

Conclusion

16. With the exciting line-up at SFFA and RPBA, and the enjoyable SFF events taking place all around the city, I hope you have a rewarding and pleasant stay in Singapore.

17. Thank you.