



Leo Kwan (2nd from left) accompanying Mr. Donald Tsang at EMSD 50th Anniversary Cocktail Reception 1998.

Before making a dramatic switch of my career to tea, I had been having a successful business and reputation as a creative consultant. My clients had been international brands, corporations and the HK government for their major communication and marketing needs. Here, in 1998, I was photographed with Donald Tsang, ex-Chief Executive of HKSAR (second right, he was Secretary of Finance at the time of photo) and the head of Electrical & Mechanical Services Department, Hugh Phillipson (middle). The department's public image had been reengineered under my direction and execution; and it was considered an unprecedented success for the government.

Changing my path to tea was a conscientious decision.

SPECIALISM IN TEA, SINCE 1998

1998~1999

Image and business consultant for Moon Garden Tea House, Hong Kong and Tokyo

(A small voluntary project to help the student of a friend that changed the course of my career)

1999

Establishment of Lee Kwan Tea Trade Limited to develop the first modern tea brand in Hong Kong — MingCha®. The brand was initially launched in Paris at SIAL 2000 and awarded "Product of Innovation"

2000

Publication of "Not All Teas Are Created Equal", 4 editions, in addition to a Japanese version. Permanent rare book collection at the Boston Athenaeum (Appendix A1)

2001

Endorsement by Japanese "Iron Chef" Yuji Wakiya, later cobranding for his private label tea brand (Appendix A2)

2001

Endorsement by the renowned veteran Swiss wine master Hanspeter Reichmuth

2002

Approached by Seibu HK for a co-branding promotion with Bvlgari® Parfums for their white tea fragrance (Appendix A3)

2002~2004

Columnist for "中国茶を極める18講" for 香港ポスト, and afterwards a few other subsequent articles. Japanese translation by Kaori Oshima (Appendix A4)

2002

Inclusion in the Celebrity Gift Basket for the Academy Awards (Oscar) night in Hollywood in 2002 after a scouting team for the Basket approached myself. MingCha became the first ever product and brand of Hong Kong or Chinese origin to be so honoured (Appendix A5)

2003

Design, development and training for the first MingCha Tea Bar in London at Selfridges (Appendix A6)

2003 ~ 2015

Provision of contents for Jane Pettigrew for various magazine articles and books

2003 ~ 2006

Training for teashop operators, including Tea Smith of London, the Tea Bar of Bamford Organic Farm in Gloucester, the Landmark Mandarin Oriental in Hong Kong and various smaller shops in Japan

2003

Negotiation, design, development, recruitment and marketing for the MingCha Tea Bar for Hong Kong at Pacific Place (Appendix A7)

2004

Endorsement by Jane Pettigrew, the most prolific writer on tea in the English language, for my book "Not All Teas Are Created Equal" (Appendix A1)

2004

Head of the Delegation of Traditional Oolong Producers to the first Terra Madre in Turin, Italy, an international convention of farmers of traditional practices held by Slow Food®. Presented a talk on how smart marketing can help traditional small stake farming, as well as a guest presenter in the event's Taste Workshop, cohosted by the Slow Food International President, Giacomo Mojon (Appendix A8)

2005

Design, development, recruitment and frontline operation for the flagship MingCha Tea Bar and Teashop in Hong Kong (Appendix A9)

2005

Full episode feature as "Brand x Design x Chinese Tea" in RTHK's TV series "Design in Progress" (Appendix A10)

2005 ~ 2006

Numerous press coverage on the unique image, brand and operation concept (Appendix A11)

2006

Concession of the tea company and brand to ex-wife

2007

Quoted in "The Story of Tea: A Cultural History and Drinking Guide", a book by Mary Lou Heiss, published by Ten Speed Press, Berkeley

2009 ~ present

Content and website design for TeaGuardian.com, the only major tea education and reference site without commercial tea news and used widely by the trade and tea enthusiasts as the most reliable base information source (Appendix A12)

2012 ~ present

Creation and operation of TeaHong.com, an internet teashop with the largest collection of purely single origin, whole leaf, premium quality tea available online (Appendix A13)

2019

Featured character and stories in "Der Teekultivar: Auf der Suche nach Spitzentee in China und Indien" (The Tea Cultivar: In Search of Premium Tea in China and India) a book by Hanspeter Reichmuth, published by Kellner Bremen, Germany (Appendix A14)