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Jason and the Golden Chalice: Pouring New Meaning into Indigenous Luxury

In China's Forest City, terroir, tradition and talent are maturing into a refined expression of place



▲ Jason, Wine Insider of Anantara Guiyang Resort

In the misty uplands of Southwest China, [Anantara Guiyang Resort](#)'s wine insider Jason is engaged in a delicate tightrope act. In a region where the fiery Moutai liquor has dominated social functions for millennia, his mission is to show how tradition can open itself to new expressions – in this case, through wine. As [Anantara Hotels & Resorts](#) marks its 25th anniversary with the 'People Who Inspire' series, Jason captures the brand's stewardship of authentic local experiences and the confident rise of China's wine culture.

Guizhou's proud Miao and Dong culinary heritage has shaped a fermentation-driven cuisine defined by spiciness, numbing heat and, above all, sourness, often layered with perfumed notes from indigenous plants like the citrusy *Litsea cubeba*. Balancing these volatile flavours takes skill, not only for chefs but also for sommeliers.

Jason's instincts are as sharp as the flavours of his home province. His UK-based WSET training and experience in the high-pressure China Young Sommelier Team Competition give him both the technique and the confidence to get the balance right. His wine list reflects this precision: Chinese and international labels with gentle tannins, cool-fermentation profiles and lighter alcohol levels allow the wine to support rather than compete with dishes perfected over generations.

“Miao cuisine is central to the region's identity, and the right wine can turn a casual tasting experience into a moment of real discovery.”

During his tasting salon sessions, Jason embraces wine's social dimension, inviting guests to slow down, taste with intention and connect with one another through the experience. By bringing in wine educators and enthusiasts, he helps nurture a local wine culture that is steadily gaining confidence. He also trains the next generation of hospitality professionals, encouraging them to balance technical skill with the hallmark of great service: attentiveness and confidence grounded in humility.

“True confidence comes not from knowing everything, but from respecting the wine, the guest and the story behind every bottle.”

And he will certainly need his best stories to engage someone as well travelled as Minor Hotels' founder Bill Heinecke, whom Jason hopes to host at one of his tasting salons. Yet he also knows that the land speaks more eloquently than any sommelier. When he takes his guest of honour through the Miao and Dong villages, he'll let the landscapes, the people and the flavours do the talking. Nothing staged, just life unfolding as it has for millennia, with terroir and tradition filling the glass and nourishing the soul.

“I teach my team to approach each pour not as a performance but as a dialogue.”

Sometimes, the surest footing comes from listening to the land and letting it tell the story.

Follow the journey at anantara.com/25th-anniversary.



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About Anantara Hotels & Resorts

A luxury hospitality brand for modern travellers, Anantara Hotels & Resorts connects guests to genuine places, people and stories in some of the world’s most extraordinary destinations. Each Anantara embraces the surroundings and culture of its destination, creating unforgettable memories for every guest since 2001. From city to sea and desert to jungle, Anantara delivers

heartfelt, Thai-inspired hospitality at its over 50 hotels and resorts across Asia, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and the Indian Ocean.

Anantara Hotels & Resorts is a Minor Hotels brand and recognises its guests through one unified loyalty programme, Minor DISCOVERY, part of GHA DISCOVERY.

Visit anantara.com for more information, and connect with Anantara on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X and YouTube.

About Minor Hotels

Minor Hotels is a global leader in the hospitality industry with more than 640 hotels, resorts and branded residences in operation and committed development across 66 countries. The group crafts innovative and insightful experiences through its hotel brands including Anantara, Elewana Collection, The Wolseley Hotels, Tivoli, Minor Reserve Collection, NH Collection, nhow, Avani, Colbert Collection, NH, Oaks, and iStay, as well as a diverse portfolio of restaurants and bars, travel experiences, and spa and wellness brands. With over four decades of expertise, Minor Hotels builds stronger brands, fosters lasting partnerships, and drives business success by always focusing on what matters most to our guests, team members and partners.

Minor Hotels is a proud member of the Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) and recognises its guests through one unified loyalty programme, Minor DISCOVERY, part of GHA DISCOVERY.

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