

## TRAVELS

MARGRIT  
MONDAVI

The wife of the late entrepreneur Robert Mondavi never hid in his shadow; rather, she complemented his work of transforming California's Napa Valley into the hub of American vinification. *Margie T Logarta* caught up with her during a short Hongkong visit for two dinners, set up by Q Production, which saw Michelin-Star Chef Alvin Leung and Robert Mondavi Winery Chef Jeff Mosher co-create a special menu.

**WHAT WAS YOUR HUSBAND LIKE?**

His love and passion for wine and generosity was what made him such a great personality. He certainly had a lot to do with the way Napa Valley grew.

**IS THAT THE REASON YOU FELL IN LOVE WITH HIM?**

He was so honest, a bit naive even. He hated buffets. He just wanted to sit down with a plate in front of him, a piece of bread and a glass of wine and talk to people. That for him was a great dinner.

**WHERE DID YOU AND MR MONDAVI LIKE TO TRAVEL TO?**

He worked so hard to establish his winery



that by the time I came into his life, he could travel as much as he wanted to and when he wanted to. We liked to go where things were happening; where it was the right time to visit. We were in Berlin in '89 when the Wall fell; we came over to Hongkong for the Handover in '97.

For the Millennium, Bob and I wrote down on separate pieces of paper four places we wanted to spend it in and when we compared them, Bali emerged as the number one choice. So we went there.

**WHERE DID YOU STAY?**

Amandari.

**OH, YOU'RE AN "AMAN JUNKIE" THEN.**

We've also stayed at the Aman in Borobudur, so I guess we are.

**WHAT DO YOU DO TO EXPERIENCE A NEW PLACE?**

Try out the food and wine, of course. I love to cook and I've written two cookbooks, one with my daughter Annie and another on my own. Having been in PR and later [and up to now] in charge of organising cultural events, jazz festivals and art exhibits for Robert Mondavi Winery, I also started cooking schools in 1976, where I brought in great French chefs to give classes.

**YES, PEOPLE NOW LIKE TO DO THINGS DURING THEIR HOLIDAYS, AND COOKING CLASSES HAVE PROVED TO BE VERY POPULAR.**

Except that people used to stay for a week for these activities. Now they only have three days!

**BESIDES THE CULINARY EXPERIENCE, HOW ELSE DO YOU TRY TO GET TO KNOW A CITY?**

My passion is museums. I've just come back from the Quirinale in Rome, viewing an exhibit of Roman frescoes that have never been shown before. Then, two years before I married Bob, a friend of mine and I went to Avignon where we were able to view a retrospective of Picasso after he had just died. It was fantastic with about 500 pieces, ranging from his early works, pottery from his different periods – blue, pink, cubism, abstract. I took lots of pictures. You were allowed to then.

**WHICH IS THE BEST WINE MUSEUM YOU'VE VISITED?**

Chateau Mouton Rothschild. ■

## GREAT READS

**THE CHINA STRATEGY**  
EDWARD TSE, BASIC BOOKS,  
US\$26.95

Edward Tse is Booz & Company's chairman for Greater China and his aim in this book is to help companies prepare for the new China. I thought I would be unimpressed when I started reading the book while watching an inflight film, but later I decided I needed to re-read each chapter. By the end of the flight I had covered the pages with markings, some agreeing, some disagreeing, but all involved with Tse's analysis of where China is and where future opportunities lie, and the practical advice within. The analysis boils down to Tse identifying four key drivers of change in China. The first he calls "Open China", the emergence of China's middle class and the process of urbanisation which will transform China's huge mass market into a highly differentiated and sophisticated multi-tiered one. The second is "Competitive China", which speaks for itself, then "Official China", in which Tse explains that state-owned companies and a state controlled economy are here to stay. Finally, there is the less controversial "One World" driver which says that China and the rest of the world are becoming more interdependent than ever.

I was impressed with Tse's advice on how to tell which Chinese companies can provide the best alliances for particular purposes, what part of China companies should enter first and how to manage financing. Tse's point is to not think of China as one big market of 1.3 billion but instead to "provide a holistic view of the Chinese business environment, looking at consumers, competitive enterprises, the government, integration with the rest of the world, and the ways these elements interact". I didn't agree with everything in this book, but it has made me think deeply about the challenges and opportunities that China represents in a new way. I would highly recommend it.

Tom Otley

