

Simon Thompson

Posted by Lisa from FUSAC on 29 juin 2013

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Simon Thompson was born in 1968 in the United Kingdom, grew up in Cognac. France is his adopted country in which he has lived for over 30 years. A few years ago, Simon, after years of experience within multinationals in the food and drinks industry, created Tailormade Sales and Marketing which specializes in solutions to small and medium sized companies, and publicity and communication agencies. Tailormade, by its very name and nature, offers timely and customized solutions, made to measure at the request of the client. In 2012 Simon launched www.thompsons.fr which offers single distillery Bordelais brandy and vodka.

How did you get into spirits? Growing up in the Cognac region exposes you to the industry. After my business school in Paris (-ESCP Europe) I did a Masters specialising in business applied to the spirits industry. **Many of your spirits have been aged for quite a long time and yet this seems to be a new venture for you. How does this work?** We first launched the new venture at Vinexpo in 2011. All French wine producing regions have their own eaux-de-vie distilled from the local wines and I had always wondered why one did not seem to exist in the prestigious Bordeaux region, one of the largest in the world. During one of many strolls through the bordelais I was lucky enough to discover the only stock of Fine Bordeaux A.O.R (appellation d'origine réglementée) still in existence today. White wines from Ugni blanc and Colombar varietals from the Bordeaux region have been first double distilled (à repasse) in traditional copper pot-stills and then set down to mature in oak casks, only to be woken from a deep slumber, like a sleeping beauty, by a subject of Her Royal Majesty, who has fallen in love with this absolutely unique elixir from Bordeaux. Inspired by the region's wine making

craftsmanship and rich history, but resolutely contemporary, the Thompson's® range offers unique selected eaux-de-vie, exclusively from the Bordeaux region. The shared history between Bordeaux, Aquitaine and England is long and rich. The discovery of this forgotten treasure promises to add a new page to that special relationship. Since then I have bought up the last remaining stocks of Fine Bordeaux available in the world. The distillery that makes Fine Bordeaux has redistilled for the first time last year since 10 years. Now we have to be patient.

The vodka is a new idea and I am working on a new concept of a grape based Gin with botanicals specific to the Bordelais region. The idea behind the Thompson's brand is a French product with a Brit twist

(hence the tricolore with the Union Jack peaking out) and the traditional "Bordelais" wine bottle with a Vinolok (glass stopper) that I fell in love with.

I have also been active in ensuring the appellation Fine Bordeaux survives as it needs to become a IP (European protection: Indication de Provenance) before 2015. The Syndicat des Bordeaux et des Bordeaux supérieurs are going to be "home" to the Organisme de gestion de Fine Bordeaux so things are looking good.

When, where and how did you find your first FUSAC? When I came up to Paris from Cognac as a student, I often picked up copies in "ex pat haunts". Now I get my copy at WH Smith

What is the most satisfying thing about making spirits? Creating something from scratch that people are going to enjoy, that will be part of their "good moments" in life.

What is the oddest request a client has made? "Like the content, want a more traditional packaging": no way!

What proves you are English? Sense of humour about others and especially myself

What is your chief characteristic? Loyalty

Your motto? The Thompson's motto: Dum spiro spero (as I breath I have hope)

The French expression that makes you smile: "Au fur et à mesure": my parents had a hard time pronouncing it; we ended up using a short cut "ofuré"

Favorite smell? Melon

Favorite patisserie? Croissant aux amandes

Favorite comfort food? Mashed potato

Favorite drink? Apart from Thompson's? Bordeaux Clairet.

Favorite quote? "I don't want to belong to a club that accepts me as a member" - Groucho Marx

In which Parisian monument would you like to be locked in for the night? with whom? La Tour d'Argent with a team of women's beach volleyball

The most significant author you have read? A prayer for Owen Meany by John Irving

What music puts you in a good mood? Heavy metal / AC/DC

A talented person who should be better known? L.J Gore (film maker)

An animal that fascinates you? Sharks

A female icon? Margret Thatcher

What is the hardest thing you've ever done? Divorce

Which actor/actress would you like to play you in a movie? Russell Crowe: my wife says I look like him. Between movies...

Vacation rhymes with... Discoveration

An introduction that changed your life: My wife

A discovery you would like to have made: A cure for acne

In which other century would you have liked to live? Hundred years war (studied at university)

A historic place that stops you in your tracks: Auschwitz

If you were to send a postcard from Paris what image would you choose? Sacre Coeur

Who is your hero? Churchill

If you were a film, what film would you be? Forrest Gump

If you were a song...? One by U2

If you were a shoe...? Doc Martens

If you were a building...? Palais de Justice in Brussels

If you were a drink...? I AM Thompson's :)

Where can we find your products in Paris? All good cavistes looking for something different or on line www.thompsons.fr

What is your next project? A 1996 Ile of Aran with a Sauternes finish