

# WHAT'S IN A NAME

Hailed as an emperor among kings, the '1598 Fürst Wallerstein Edition Privée' proves to be a royally good brew, reports Gary Manfredi

DESPITE THAILAND'S UNSAVOURY CUSTOMS duty, the wine scene still manages to trickle along for those determined to have their Burgundy and Bordeaux vintages at any cost. Aside from the enjoyment of taste, one can't deny the snob appeal with all things related to the 'nectar of the gods'.

But beer? Well now, class issues aside, suffice it to say that nothing on the domestic or imported markets has been able to inspire the same regal feelings of Champagne, or solicit anywhere near the same price. That is until now. At 5,000 baht a pop, the 1598 Fürst Wallerstein Edition Privée is a handcrafted brew with a most unique pedigree: German brewing expertise dating back over 400 years from the Princely House of Oettingen-Wallerstein, an aristocratic family whose roots go all the way back to the 12th century.

The same recipe has been produced exclusively for the clan's enjoyment ever since 1598 (hence the name). However, the last few years have seen small batches released by Prince Carl-Eugen zu Oettingen-Wallerstein to select restaurants and hotels in Germany and a smattering of locations outside Europe.

Now, due to fortuitous arrangements through the Dusit Thani owners and Thailand's premier boutique wine importer, FIN, a limited quota of the brew will be offered here from a total production of only around 10,000 bottles per year.

Unlike conventional beers which are fermented just once, this princely brew (just like the best champagnes) is triple fermented, requiring six full months to complete,



in a process utilising only local ingredients while following the dictates of Germany's strict Reinheitsgebot (Beer Purity Law). This all results in a full-bodied, light and fruity sweetness granting nine-percent alcohol.

Destined to be 'a beer for wine drinkers', a slightly creamy head crowns the rich amber colour as it's poured from the elegant 750ml krug into its own hand-blown Schott Zwiesel glass. "Connoisseurs", explains the Prince, "will appreciate the sweet aroma and full-bodied, complex taste that makes this an ample substitute for a good wine and perfect for pairing with a good meal."

Prince Carl-Eugen and his wife, Princess Anna oversaw the brand's formal Asian launch at Dusit Thani's Benjarong restaurant. Remarking on the event the Prince stated, "I am releasing the 1598 Fürst Wallerstein to the public to show the market a different kind of brew, for the taste and love of beer, and also to show the world what a traditional German premium beer is like."

The Prince's consulting Sommelier, Rudiger Meyer was also on hand to conduct tasting sessions and to point out that aside from standard pairings with cheese, chocolate, foie gras and smoked fish, the 1598 Fürst Wallerstein Edition Privée marries remarkably well to the spicy flavours of Thai cuisine. *Chaiyo!*

[www.1598.fuerst-wallerstein.de](http://www.1598.fuerst-wallerstein.de)

