

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Mot & Chandon toasts Sub-Saharan and East Africa for Champagne growth

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Pierre-Louis Araud, business development manager and global brand ambassador for Mot & Chandon, eyes Sub-Saharan and East Africa for the region's growing thirst for Champagne. Image courtesy of Mot & Chandon

By [Maryanne Maina](#)

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Situated in Champagne region of France is the Maison Mot & Chandon that has been a pioneer and innovator in the art of celebration, resonating with Africans' passion for celebrations.

Founded in 1743, Mot & Chandon is the maison that introduced Champagne to the world by offering a range of unique wines for every occasion.

From the iconic Mot Imprial to the Grand Vintage Collection, the extroverted Mot Ros Imprial and the unique Nectar Imperial, each Champagne label bares its trademark bright fruitiness, with an enticing palate and an elegant maturity.

In this interview, Pierre-Louis Araud, business development manager and global brand ambassador for **Mot & Chandon**, discusses Mot & Chandon's positioning and adherence to quality, the potential of Sub-Saharan and East Africa and the various markets within, and Champagne consumption trends.

Here is the interview with Mr. Araud in its entirety:

As the ambassador for the prestigious Mot & Chandon, your work must be interesting, as you are involved in Champagne tastings, attending social gatherings where your brand is consumed and visiting your key markets. What is the most important aspect of your role?

My role is to ensure Jean-Remy Mot's lifelong goal, "To share the magic of Champagne with the world." To share the spirit of Mot & Chandon with Africa and to translate the emotion, we share the story by bringing joy through our Champagne.

I spend lot of time in bars, clubs and parties viewing our brand and how it is being appreciated Champagne lovers.



Chilling out: Moët & Chandon's Ice Imperial Rosé. Image credit: Moët & Chandon

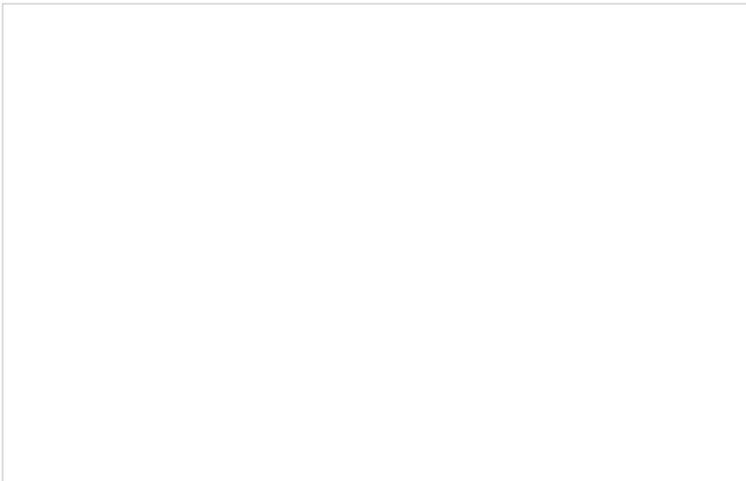
How do you define the product?

Moët & Chandon is Champagne. It means it is not just sparkling wine.

There is a big difference between Champagne and sparkling wine, as it is very exclusive and demanding while making them.

You can only make Champagne only in Champagne. It is not produced widely as it is produced in a very specific region at the heart of France.

In this region, all these have to come from this small region. A lot of exclusivity and details go into the production of Champagne.



Moët & Chandon "caves" or cellars under the Avenue de Champagne in Epemay, France. Image courtesy of Moët & Chandon

What is your general overview of the Moët & Chandon business in Sub-Saharan Africa?

I believe that as African economies improve and the middle class grows, consumption of Champagne will increase as tastes and lifestyles evolve.

There is a changing attitude and the African affluent is now very concerned about personal growth, the environment, social responsibility and is willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products.

We really expect that these economies will continue to improve because it will be good for people. At the end, it will be good for our business.

You know, most of the players in terms of sparkling wines, spirits and Champagnes sometimes, have not been able

to produce wines this way.

Mot & Chandon before being wine, it is Champagne, and Champagne is a luxury product.

We are always there to make people dream, have high desires and purchasing ability.

We hope that with a better economy, the purchasing power of consumers will rise.

There's a whole lot of deep interest in African market.

What are the ranges of Mot & Chandon products that are available in most of the African countries such as Ivory Coast, Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya and the rest?

There is a wide range of products from Mot & Chandon in most of these countries and these include Mot Imprial, Mot Nectar Rose Imprial, and Mot Nectar Imprial, which are working very well.

We noticed the demand for the high-end products and top-range products. Hence, these are the reasons why we chose to propose them as well the newcomer in our range of products that we call MCIII.

MC stands for Mot & Chandon, while the Roman numeral III reflects the three centuries that span this maison's existence. It actually symbolizes three different techniques, or as the company refers to them, "stratums," of this wine's creation.

MCIII is the result of aging and combining a number of Mot's best Grand Vintage wines into what results in an ultra-luxurious, non-vintage Champagne.

The maturation of these various vintages has been divided into a trilogy of aging vessels encompassing wood, glass, and metal. This innovative process took Mot's Chef de Cave Benot Gouez and his team of winemakers more than 20 years to perfect.

Nigeria is your leading market in regards to Champagne consumption.

Nigeria was very interesting to me.

Before my first visit to the country, I had heard that people drink Champagne all the time and I thought that I needed to see this for myself. And, yes, this is exactly what I saw in Nigeria.

There are online companies that even deliver the drink to your location.

Either during the day or at night, you will see that Nigerians like to party and enjoy life.

Nigeria is a strong market for our products.

Beyond parties, we have the wedding market.

Weddings are big in Nigeria. There is also a business of having Mot & Chandon for lunch or dinner, for people who appreciate it.

This lifestyle is similar to Ivory Coast.

In Abidjan there is a club called 40/40, which caters to Mot. When you walk around in the club you will see huge slabs designed with the word Moet.

The main difference in these two countries is the size of the market, Nigerians having a larger population than Ivory Coast, hence large consumption numbers.



Fete Trianon

What is the growth of Mot & Chandon consumption in East Africa?

Kenya has realized great growth in Champagne consumption leading in East Africa. It is stable market in regards to its economy, quite sophisticated in development and caters to a lot of foreigners, too.

As the economy keeps growing, more and more Kenyans want to enjoy the finer things in life such as Mot & Chandon as they celebrate their success. This makes Kenya our leading Champagne base in East Africa.

Tanzania is also an upcoming market that also enjoys Champagne.

Which are the leading Champagne markets and is there a difference in their tastes?

Nigeria is the leading Champagne market in Sub-Saharan Africa, followed by South Africa and in third place we have three countries, Angola, Ivory Coast and Kenya.

The tastes differ in each market as we discovered.

South Africa has an appreciation for a sweet taste just like in Kenya. In these two markets, we have Mot Nectar and Mot Brut.

What are our expectations for your products in Sub-Saharan Africa and how would you assess the performance of your products in the region?

In terms of what we want for our products in the region is that our products should be the brand of choice for the Africans.

We know the market and that is why we are going deeply into it.

Of course, we have competitors, but we have a beautiful brand that is known for celebration and Africans love to celebrate, therefore this is the perfect brand for happiness.

In essence, your brand is meant to make people enjoy and celebrate life. Isn't that the main essence?

Exactly. To make people dream and to share good moments with them.

What is essential is to share the joy of this beautiful product.

Irrespective of who you are, you just want to celebrate a good moment with your family and friends, or a big moment in your life. It is the same behavior in front of the bottle, and the atmosphere after the taste of the drink. The ice is broken and everyone becomes friendly.

Champagne is about celebration of life and that is why you can drink it anytime and anywhere, from breakfast to dinner or even at tea time.

Mot & Chandon is a product of success and glamour.



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