

## **Hong Kong - 1 new airport, 4 new cigar outlets!** by *Sung Ho Cheung*

If you happened to be travelling to or passing through Hong Kong's brand new airport at Chek Lap Kok and found yourself with a couple of hours to spare and you fancied a puff, you might try any one of these *recent arrivals* to Hong Kong's growing cigar scene...

**Cigar Dominicano** - is a smart little cigar store located a little off the beaten track, almost opposite the front entrance of The Garden Hotel in Tsimshatsui East. (pronounced Chim-Shah-Choi East or in short, TST East). It has been open for about 9 months now. They have another store in Macau. If you plan to stay at any one of the tourist hotels in this area, then it's convenient. But if you're just passing through, it can be a bit of an ordeal to locate. However, if you're determined to check it out, it's worth the effort. There is, as the name suggests a (seemingly) contrived marketing strategy to convince shoppers to switch/buy/try Dominican-made brands. Amongst the selection of Dominican brands that were available, the *Ashton* brand appeared to be the most attractive and familiar brand carried.

If you're seeking a peaceful smoke at a reasonable price (for Hong Kong) in a quiet location in the company of some very charming staff members - then this is a place for you.

**Swanky Smoke** - is located in *The Lee Gardens*, one of the swankiest shopping malls in Causeway Bay, on Hong Kong Island. It's neighbours include Cartier, Chanel, Mercedes Benz etc. and despite being in such august company, there's not a hint of snootiness to be found in the Swanky Smoke cigar store. How refreshing!

The store itself is of a good size and once through the looking-glass doors, it's an airy and comfortable sort of place - and very welcoming it is too. Many of the cigars available are displayed on a back-wall rack of shelves. There's a few display cabinets here and there, containing one or two humidors and a small range of lighters, but not much in the way of other essential cigar accessories.

On offer is a range of Cuban brands, and other non-Cuban brands e.g. *Nestor, Evelio, Tenorio, Arturo Fuente* etc. there is also a selection of small sized machine-made cigars. The big plus is that the price levels in this store are very reasonable - especially when you take into consideration its upmarket location. And when you do finally make a purchase, there's room enough to sit down and enjoy a very pleasant and relaxing puff. There's plenty of swank in this store, but none of the pretensions. Be sure to check it out.

**Prices of Non-Cuban Cigars in Hong Kong** - here's a small price list that will give you some idea of the cost of a non-Cuban premium smoke in Hong Kong!

Cigar	Purchase Price (1 stick)	Date of Purchase
Nestor 747 Series II - Toro	HKD96	July 98
Arturo Fuente - <i>Don Carlos</i> # 4	HKD85	July 98
Evelio - Toro	HKD105	July 98
Ashton - Robusto	HKD90	July 98
Tenorio - Long Corona	HKD55	July 98
Tenorio - Robusto	HKD83	July 98
VM Santana - Robusto	HKD83	July 98
Montesino - Churchill	HKD80	July 98

(USD1: HKD7.8)

**Other News - *Aficionado Cigarros*** brand new divan called the **8-9-8 Cigar Bar** will be opening shortly at the JW Marriot Hotel on Hong Kong island. It is part of the company's positive expansion drive (*see previous article*) to consolidate *Aficionado Cigarros* presence in the local market. It promises to be a breath-taking event and a much welcomed addition to that fine hotel for cigar loving guests.

There is also other news abounding about *Aficionado Cigarros* ambitious expansion plans into China - news about which, will be revealed shortly.

***Pacific Cigar Co. Ltd*** have recently opened a small walk-in humidor at the prestigious Conrad Hotel on Hong Kong island - just opposite the JW Marriot hotel. Located on the 8<sup>th</sup> Floor and comfortably nestled between two of the best restaurants in Hong Kong - La Brasserie and Nicholini's -

it's a perfect place to enjoy a fine meal followed by a superb Cuban cigar. Only the very best is available at this fine establishment.

**Spoilt for choice?** No, not really - but if you do find yourself in Hong Kong, there's NOW plenty of it; and whether your tastes clamour for the forbidden fruits of the Cuban brands or for the already familiar non-Cuban premium brands - you're sure to find satisfaction somewhere around town. And now, with ever more fine cigar outlets reigniting the previously rather stale cigar scene in Hong Kong, it's what you might call a very welcome breath of fresh air - so to speak!

**"Bill and his favourite Cuban"** - in my previous article I said I would try and find out where - if at all possible - whether or not Bill or any of his ~~AIDS~~ aides obtained any *forbidden fruit* for him to enjoy. Well, no one is owning up to the *forbidden fruit*, nor to the supply of Cuban cigars either. So, as far as things go, in this humble foreign correspondent's books - his character remains stain-free. Way to go Bill!

Oh, just one final thought: Bill - if you do get the urge to go 'dunking' again, please stick with a donut ... it's a *whole* lot less trouble and you can eat it - without remorse, and what's more - you won't run the risk ... of ruining a good cigar.