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Italy celebrates with sweet string sounds

■ CITYSEEN
 Vivian Chen
 Jun 06, 2011

The consulate general of Italy in Hong Kong hosted a two-day soiree last week as one of a series of celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy. The Accademia Teatro alla Scala string sextet performed at the Island Shangri-la on Wednesday and in Central Plaza Sky Lobby on Thursday. The concert programme included music by Italian composers Giuseppe Verdi and Pietro Mascagni. Consul-General of Italy in Hong Kong and Macau Alessandra Schiavo and more than 300 guests attended the two private events. Chief Executive Donald Tsang Yam-kuen attended the celebrations on Thursday....



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 Alessandra Schiavo

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CITY

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VIVIAN CHEN

Sent tips and invitations to chesee@scmp.com

David is the best man to turn wedding dreams into reality

David Tutera knows what makes a fabulous party. The event planner's star-studded client list includes Jennifer Lopez, Ellen DeGeneres and Tom Hanks.

The behind-the-scenes hero takes the center spotlight in the television show *My Fair Wedding* on 7th Days of Events. A new season premiered on Nine TV last week.

In the show, Tutera takes on challenges to transform often crazy ideas into dream weddings.

His most memorable one was to transform a "mini truck" theme into a "gorgeous elegant affair," though he readily admits that this was a tough one.

The celebrity wedding planner has yet to have a client in Hong Kong but says he is looking forward to planning weddings involving different cultures and traditions.

Every single wedding has a unique storyline about the couple and every couple is unique," he said.

Although he has been in the trade since the age of 18, Tutera says he is yet to encounter a "bridezilla."

"Trust me, I've had plenty of brides who become stressed out and get wrapped up in the planning but I've never had a disaster," he said.

If other readers have the reasons why she's getting married...because she's unlucky to have found the one.

If you have found the one, will soon get married or have recently tied the knot, and want to share the joy of your big day with our readers on our weekly wedding page, email your notes and story to wedding@scmp.com



Wong Cho-lan



Bono Wong, Maggie Cheung and Michael Mu

Forget the cocktails! What's all this about a pending divorce between Nicholas and Cecilia?

The haze blocked the romantic view from the newly opened Japanese restaurant Inakaya - located on the 10th floor of the International Commerce Centre - on June 2.

But that only gave the paparazzi more time to push the celebrity gossip of Inakaya's cocktail party about the hottest rumor in town - that Nicholas Lee Ting-hang and his wife, actress singer Cecilia Cheung Pak-chi, are getting a divorce.

Radio host Eileen Chia Siu-yun mentioned a pending suit on her programme, saying Cheung was trying to get Lee to transfer property to her according to the terms of their wedding contract.

After that, Chia knew there would be no escaping the questions repeatedly centered at the restaurant, she repeated the refrain that she had simply done a

reporter's job - and had nothing to add to her story.

Asked if her good friend Deborah Lee - the "mistress" - had authorized the story's release, she would only reply: "If the information was not factual, someone would have stepped forward to point that out.

"I have to accept the source. I'm not worried about whether Cheung is angry with me or not, as long as I'm telling the truth."

Other celebrities at the party were also peppered with questions about the glamorous couple, and marriage contracts in general.

Everyone forgot about the so-called cocktail being created at the bar by world-class "mixologist" Joyce Sakamoto. Oh well, at least some of his fellow Japanese staff applauded his skills - and took a sip or two. *Wong Cho-lan*



David Tutera



Shirley Yeung



Eileen Chia



Patsy Chan



Stephen Chan, Bernice Liu and Virginia Lok

Runway may be a waste of money, expert says

Check Lap Kok plan needs to address problem of crowded airspace over Pearl River Delta region

By King Chung
kc.ing@scmp.com

A new airport runway will not help relieve congestion because much of the problem stems from restrictive use of civilian flight routes over the Pearl River Delta region, an aviation expert warned.

Dr Law Cheung kwok, associate director of Chinese University Aviation Policy and Research Centre, said a third runway could be a waste of money unless the problem of crowded airspace in the delta region is resolved.

He also said the Airport Authority could consider building a shorter runway in save money.

At yesterday's HKSAR City Forum, Law urged Hong Kong to focus on Beijing's more efficient use of airspace. "If not, there is no use having more runways," he said.

China's airspace is mainly controlled by the military, with civilian flights allowed to operate only on limited routes and at limited altitudes. Hong Kong's airspace is not under many flights still pass over the mainland.

The Airport Authority last week launched a three-month public con-

About a third of flights using the airport are short-haul flights to and from China

By LAN CHEUNG KWOK

aviation on plans to expand the Check Lap Kok airport to cope with 8.5m users.

One option calls for building a third, parallel runway north of the existing two at a cost of about 10.8 billion. A cheaper option is to upgrade the existing two runways, costing 10.4 billion.

Law recently returned from a 7-day trip to Frankfurt and revealed a fourth runway is being built there for under 1.5 billion. He said Hong Kong, like Frankfurt, could build a shorter, 2,800 metre runway instead of a stretched 3,800 metre runway.

He added: "It should be long enough because about a third of flights using the Hong Kong airport are short-haul or domestic. Flights to and from China.

"There is not need for these small planes to use a long runway."

An authority executive director William Fung Wing-yin argued it was value for money because it could generate 10.3 billion in economic benefits over 50 years.

Legislative Raymond Ho Chung-tai, also an authority board member, argued short-haul flights from the mainland would turn to taking high-speed trains to Hong Kong and Macau, the city should focus on catering for international flights.