



ALL IN THE FAMILY

梁志天父子檔
打造中環感官盛宴

STEVE AND NICHOLAS LEUNG ON THEIR FIRST **FATHER-SON**
PROJECT; PLUS BRILLIANT DECOR IDEAS FOR YOUR KITCHEN



ALL IN THE FAMILY

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A new private club in the heart of Central – designed by a creative father-son team – tells a story that's about more than just design

梁志天及梁力恒父子首次合作的私人會所項目，盛載著一段溫馨故事



It's a balmy afternoon when Steve Leung ushers me out of the heat and into the cool and the quiet of the "C+" private cigar lounge in Central, the designer begins telling me how this new project of his is personal.

"I treasure this project a lot," explains Leung. "It brings me great pleasure."

Leung's reputation was built primarily through award-winning interior design work on million-dollar mansions, five-star restaurants and hotels, and he even has a massive smart city project in Cambodia in the pipeline. So why has he worked on this 2,000 square foot space – and why is it so close to his heart?

The reasons are simple. C+ is the brainchild of Leung's 29-year-old son Nicholas; and the project presented an opportunity for the pair to take their relationship to a whole new level.

Steve, founder of the design group SLD Group Holdings, and Nicholas, founder of the Novl Studio, had both been spending significant amounts of time abroad before the global pandemic hit.

"We seldom talked. Perhaps once or twice a month," recounts Steve, who not only oversees some 600 staff at SLD, but also the nine restaurant titles under the umbrella of 1957 & Co. (Hospitality), a F&B chain he co-founded in 2016.

"But the pandemic has given us a rare opportunity to bond and to better understand each other. This was when we decided to put the idea of this private club into action."

Owned by Nicholas, and designed by Steve, the member-only club is wittily named, as C+ plays on the terms "cigar" and "exclusive" in Cantonese.

一個陽光明媚的下午，中環如常熙來攘往。在都爹利街石階及煤氣路燈旁，隱藏著一家時尚靜謐的私人雪茄會所，室內寧靜舒適，正是室內設計師梁志天 (Steve Leung) 的全新設計項目。坐在雪茄吧一隅，他緩緩道：「創作這個設計項目令我十分高興、十分珍惜。」

作為香港首屈一指的室內設計師，Steve一向主力豪華住宅別墅、世界級餐廳及酒店的設計項目，甚至正在籌劃位於柬埔寨的一個大型智慧城市項目。而這個面積約2,000呎的私人會所到底具備甚麼魅力，令獲獎無數的他如此珍視？

原因很簡單。這不僅是他29歲兒子梁力恒 (Nicholas Leung) 的首個飲食生意；也是一個讓父子倆感情升溫的契機。

作為SLD Group Holdings創辦人及1957 & Co. (Hospitality) 聯合創辦人，Steve需要同時管理一家擁有600位員工的設計公司以及坐擁九個餐廳品牌的上市餐飲集團，因此在疫情前很少時間留在香港。而Nicholas亦有經營自己的工作室Novl Studio，父子倆可謂各有各忙，經常因工作分隔兩地。

"The name was Nic's idea," Steve says with pride. "He is particularly good at branding and marketing, qualities that he showcased during his five-year tenure as a trainee at 1957 & Co."

Memories of those learning years are still fresh for Nicholas. "I was hands-on to pretty much everything, from waiting tables to cleaning the lavatory, things that all our front-line staff would do. The only thing I didn't do was kitchen work," says the suave entrepreneur, howling with laughter.

Those efforts have paid off. Leaning on his experience at 1957 & Co, Nicholas has now turned a penchant for cigars into his first business venture.

"Cigar smoking is increasing among young adults," Nicholas explains. "We want to provide a sanctuary from the city for our members to appreciate cigars with Chinese cuisine and fine wines."

Nothing at C+ comes over-designed. The main entrance, which opens on to Ice House Street, is governed by dark brown to accent the bright orange brand logo – a work done by acclaimed designer and visual artist Alan Chan. The combined clean lines and controlled colour palette stage a playful contrast to the history of neighbouring Duddell Street Steps and Gas Lamps.

Steve回憶道：「以前我們很少溝通的機會。一個月大概只有一至兩次。但因為疫情期間不能外遊，反而令我們溝通的機會大增，對話更加深入，彼此亦有更深入的了解。就是這時我們決定把私人會所這個構思付諸行動。」

由Nicholas經營、Steve設計的私人雪茄會所名為「C+」，其發音同時含有英文雪茄 (cigar) 及廣東話「私家」之意。Steve說：「名字是Nic的構思。」對於兒子的創作力，他引以為傲，續說：「他在1957 & Co作為trainee的五年間，可以看出他對品牌及營銷特別在行。」

這些學習的日子，對Nicholas來說似乎記憶猶新。他表示：「為了更深入了解公司的運作，我由前線員工做起，由傳菜到洗廁所都曾經試過。唯一沒做過的是廚房工作。」



The back entrance, accessible from Duddell Street, is more dimly lit, which helps establish an even stronger sense of secrecy and exclusivity. Here, a collage work by Chinese contemporary artist Xue Song takes pride of place. From a distance, it looks like nothing more than a traditional Chinese landscape painting. But when you gaze closely, you'll see pieces of burnt ready-made cut-outs compose a large part of the canvas, weaving beautifully the old and new, the classic and the contemporary, and giving a hint of what to expect inside the club.

Once inside, at the centre of the space is a main cigar lounge that flaunts Chinese aesthetics with a relaxed Italian twist, featuring silk wallpaper by Armani, oriental floral arrangements by Gary Kwok, and room dividers that take design cues from a traditional Chinese moon gate.

Further in, you'll find more cigar-smoking spaces and dining areas with artworks throughout. They are mostly from Steve's own collection, apart from two Chinese paintings from art specialist Catherine Kwai.

Such ornamental flair is offset by clean-lined furnishings that give off a chic, modern vibe to appeal to lure the fashionable herf, complemented by a wall of full-height orange tinted glazing that adds contemporary panache to the room.

"Most people believe a cigar place ought to be exuberant and sumptuous – styles that are demonstrated in a lot of cigar places in Hong Kong. There's nothing wrong with that, but I think customers should be given more options," says designer Steve.

And "options" is certainly the key word here, reflected also in the extensive collection the club offers of hand-rolled cigars from Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Prices range from HK\$300 to more than HK\$6,000 per stick.



Nicholas把在1957 & Co累積的經驗帶到這家私人會所，成功把他對雪茄的熱誠轉化成首個餐飲項目，並打理得井井有條。今天這個優雅時尚的豪華會所，可謂他多年來努力學習的最佳證據。

Nicholas解釋：「近年越來越多年輕人開始接觸雪茄。我們希望打造一個都市綠洲，為會員提供一個既可享受雪茄，同時可以品嚐中式美食及佳釀的地方。」

在這個愜意空間，每個細節都設計得恰到好處。會所分別設有雪廠街及都爹利街兩個入口。雪廠街正門設計簡約時尚，採用深棕色作為基調，以特顯品牌標誌的明亮橘色。俐落的線條與旁邊擁有130年歷史的都爹利街石階及煤氣路燈構成悅目對比。

而設於都爹利街的后門燈光較暗，格局更顯神秘。牆上的當眼處掛有一幅中國當代藝術家薛松的作品《崖下獨思》，充滿詩情畫意，是Steve的個人收藏。遠觀，作品與一般彩色中國山水畫無異；近賞，你會發現大部分畫布原來以舊紙張拼貼而成，新與舊完美交織，引領賓客走進門後經典與時尚交融的品味空間。

室內，主雪茄吧設於會所的中央位置，糅合中式韻味與意式雅致，採用Armani絲質牆紙、花藝大師Gary Kwok充滿東方色彩的花藝作品，以及靈感源自中國古典園林中「月洞門」的房間隔板，構建出層次感豐富的尊貴格局。

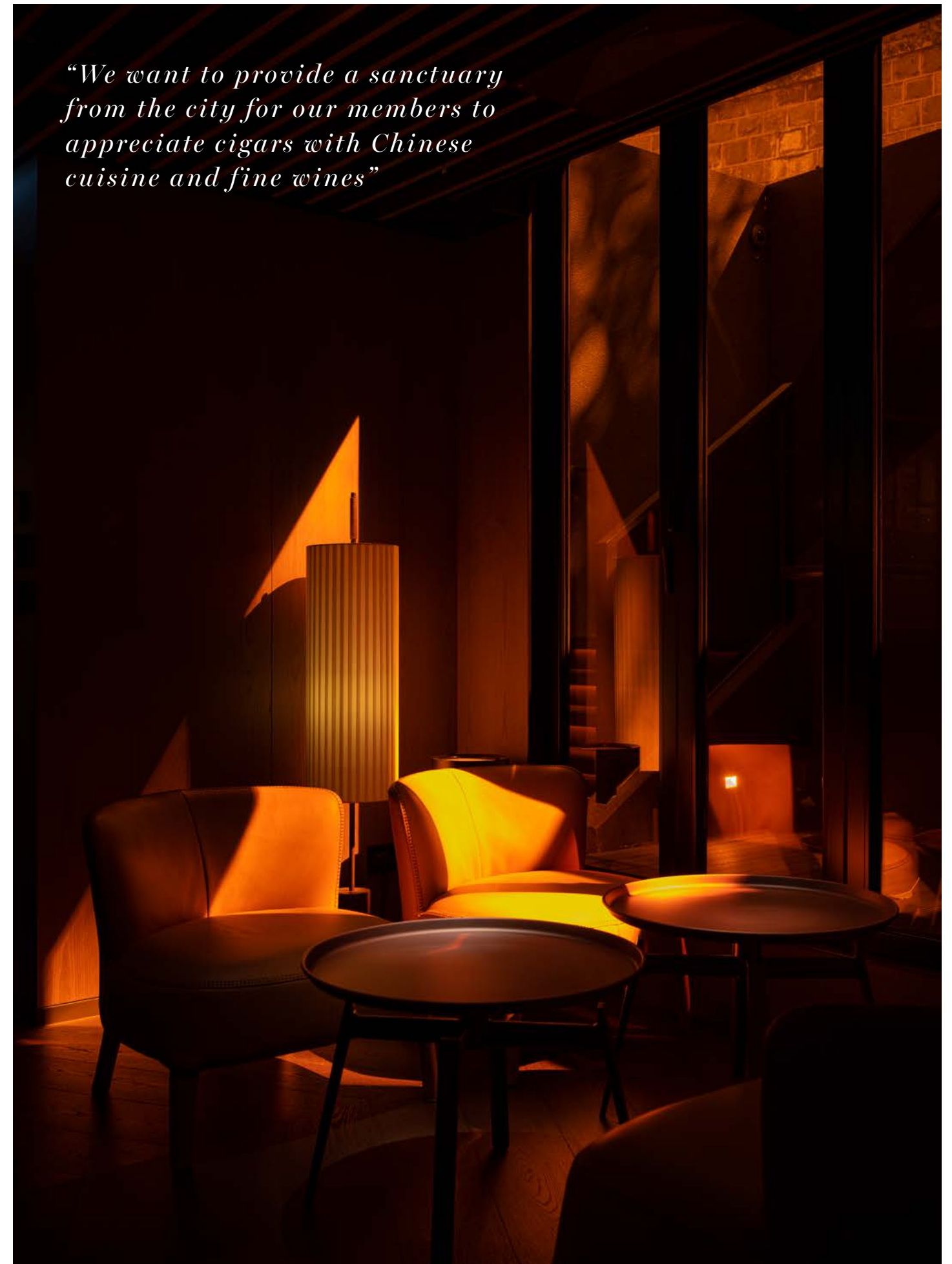
除了品嚐雪茄的空間，會所更特設中式用餐區，展示一系列中國藝術品，除了兩幅來自季豐軒創辦人季玉年的中國繪畫，其餘大部分均為Steve的私人收藏。

傢具方面，雪茄吧的坐椅及茶几均以簡約為主，線條明朗，平衡了豪華大氣的裝飾細節。在大門旁邊一面採用橘色玻璃製造的落地窗更為空間注入時尚格調，以切合年輕雪茄愛好者的口味。

Steve表示：「不少人認為雪茄吧應帶有英式古典奢華，而香港大部分雪茄吧都大同小異。這沒有問題。但我們希望給予大眾更多選擇。」

選擇，無疑是C+會所的核心信念。除了中西合璧的典雅裝潢，此一信念更見於這裡提供的多款古巴及多明尼加共和國雪茄，每枝價格由港幣300到6,000元以上不等。

Nicholas表示：「我們近七成的雪茄均來自古巴，其餘為來自多明尼加共和國的大衛杜夫雪茄。我們提供多種口味以照顧雪茄愛好者和初學者的需要。」



"Nearly 70 per cent of our cigars are from Cuba, the rest are Davidoff from the Dominican Republic," Nicholas says. "We want to make sure both occasional smokers and aficionados get what they want here."

For the uninitiated, Cuban cigars remain the best of their kind as the island nation produces some of the best leaves in the world, thanks to its ideal soil and climate conditions, just as the Bordeaux and Champagne regions are prized among serious oenophiles.

"Davidoff cigars today are produced in the Dominican Republic, but were originally made in Cuba before 1989," Nicholas continues. "So Cuban Davidoff cigars have become sought-after rarities, celebrated for their deep and complex profile."

In the humidor room, Nicholas showed me these treasures – a stack of 20-year-old Cuban Davidoffs with individual wrapping, with a hefty price tag of HK\$6,200 each.

"Just like wine, cigars are all about age. The older the cigar the more expensive it is. We've maintained close ties with Davidoff, so they'd send us some rarities from time to time," he says.

古巴雪茄享譽國際，向來備受雪茄愛好者青睞，原因是當地的土壤及氣候環境為雪茄煙葉提供最佳種植條件，就像法國波爾多和香檳地區之於葡萄酒鑑賞家一樣。

Nicholas續稱：「今天的大衛杜夫雪茄產自多明尼加，但在1989年前，它們其實產於古巴。所以古巴大衛杜夫雪茄已發展出一種強烈而複雜的味道，在市場上備受追捧。」

在恆溫室內，Nicholas向我展示他其中一款珍藏——20多年的古巴大衛杜夫雪茄，每枝獨立包裝，價值港幣6,200元。

「跟葡萄酒一樣，雪茄的價值取決於其年齡。」他解釋。「一般來說，年齡越大，價格越高。由於我們與大衛杜夫的關係不錯，品牌時不時會向我們提供一些獨特的限量版雪茄。」

對於講究生活的人士來說，品味雪茄的同時似乎少不了一杯美酒。擁有WSET四級葡萄酒文憑的Nicholas，對雪茄與美酒的搭配如數家珍。



"The pandemic has given us a rare opportunity to bond and to better understand each other"



“We want to make sure both occasional smokers and aficionados get what they want here”

It's often said that smoking and drinking go hand in hand. With a WSET Level 4 diploma in wines, Nicholas is quick to cite the best spirits to pair with cigars.

“I personally go for Macallan,” he says. “But I also root for rum, particularly Golden rum, for a more innovative approach. It contains the sugar needed to avoid the unpleasant dizziness when smoking.”

Not being a huge fan of spirits myself, I wonder if wine could provide a promising alternative to rum or whisky. Again, Nicholas rattles off labels that might compliment a cigar.

“Wines are seldom paired with cigars,” he says. “But if necessary, I'd suggest red wines with gamey and smoky flavours, such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Bordeaux, Zinfandel, or Châteauneuf-du-Pape that carries peppery notes.”

It's all about personal tastes, he says. “As long as you enjoy it, it's a good pairing.” [1]

「我個人喜歡Macallan。但如果想要一些新穎的搭配，我會建議釀酒，尤其是黃金釀酒，因為它含有的糖份有助減低因雪茄而犯暈的情況出現。」

由於本人並不喜歡烈酒的味道，故向Nicholas提議能否以葡萄酒代替威士忌或釀酒。他表示：「雪茄和葡萄酒的搭配並不常見。但如果必要的話，我會建議帶有一些野味和煙熏味的紅酒，例如赤霞珠（Cabernet Sauvignon）、波爾多（Bordeaux）、仙粉黛（Zinfandel）或略帶胡椒味的教皇新堡（Châteauneuf-du-Pape）。」

他強調，雪茄與美酒的搭配純屬個人口味，沒有對錯之分。「只要你喜歡，這就是最佳搭配。」 [1]