

## Bordeaux negociant hires William Koch advisor

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Negociant Bordeaux Winebank has hired billionaire collector William Koch's European advisor to head up its authentication activities.

Michael Egan, who worked for Sotheby's wine department for 24 years, has been based in Bordeaux since 2005 as an independent consultant to buyers such as William Koch and Russell Frye.

Both US-based collectors have launched high profile lawsuits over counterfeit wine.

Bordeaux Winebank, an €80m company owned by Henning Thoresen, comprises a multinational network of businesses including negociants, a wine investment fund, a chateau and retail shop.

While it purchases its own stock directly from chateaux, it will offer via Egan an advisory service to collectors who seek both pre- and post-purchase authentication of stock they buy through other sources.

'My role will be to work for and with clients, to value and look at the condition of stock they did not purchase through Bordeaux Winebank, rather through other collectors or from the wine trade and therefore cannot be guaranteed,' said Egan.

'For William Koch, I have been acting as a liaison to European chateaux to evaluate wine he had already purchased.'

Russell Frye, a wine collector who launched an authentication business and discussion forum after purchasing allegedly fake Thomas Jefferson bottles, has stated that refilling and relabeling old bottles is among the most common counterfeiting techniques.


However Egan said the main source is a stash of old paper stock and printing equipment used to recreate fake - but convincing - labels.

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