

# Client Connection

Maria Leung discusses the orchestration of a fine-tuned investment portfolio with  
**CITIGOLD PRIVATE CLIENT**

**S**eated at the oblong table in an amply spacious meeting room at the Citigold Private Client suite is Maria Leung. As we enter the room, the director sits demurely in a soft-pink dress, but breaks into an infectious smile and rises to greet us. She extends her hand and shakes firmly; it's an instant connection.

Connecting with people is crucial in private banking, and it seems second nature to Leung. Her winning personality is emblematic of how Citigold Private Client has catapulted to the forefront of

private banking. "The people connection, the people touch – it's all about the people business. At the end of the day, you need to have a connection with the client. For me, apart from that, I have to have a strong connection with the team, too." She reiterates the mantra: "It's all about connection; it's all about people."

For Leung and Citigold Private Client, these personal relationships are built through providing top-notch wealth management service to clients that connect on a professional as well as a personal level. How does it work at the professional level? According to Citigold Private Client,

"A dedicated banker is partnered with an experienced group of specialists located on-site – financial advisers, investment advisers, treasury consultants and financial planning consultants – as well as regional and global teams in areas such as trust services, trade, insurance and investment banking." This partnership ensures the client and their portfolio is expertly handled.

Being the first global bank to launch a premium banking service for its affluent clients, Citibank houses Citigold (which has been operating since 1982 for those with assets of at least HK\$1 million) and Citigold Private Client, a private banking platform that better services HNWIs and professional investors. Citigold Private Client offers products and services such as hedge funds, structured products and derivatives, FX and gold derivatives, and equity advisory service – all with the aim to serve this client segment's diversified needs through an efficient and timely professional investor process. Citibank's pioneering position in the market has given it the winning edge for 30 years, and many of its private banking clients have been there since the very beginning.

On a more personal level, Citigold Private Client and Leung also cater to the luxury lifestyles of their guests. Vibrant, cheerful prints of neo-pop art by Brazilian-American sensation Romero Britto hang in many of the meeting rooms, instantly livening up the space. Rooms named after various composers symbolise the melodious score composed with the necessary teamwork between client and relationship team.

It is in these meeting rooms that the Citigold Private Client bonds with their financial adviser. "Through direct discussions, our experienced relationship team will gain a thorough understanding of the client's investment portfolio and financial objectives," says Leung. Together, they compose a personalised portfolio that plays to the strengths of the market and the interests of the client.

Our particular meeting room, the Liszt (named for the Hungarian virtuoso) gave us the chance to experience the five-star treatment private clients normally receive. Fragrant, high-quality pu'er tea was served along with delightful mini egg-custard mooncakes from one of the city's most affluent hotels, The Peninsula Hong Kong. "That's what we serve our clients during the festive season," Leung explains. "It's all about connecting – with food, people and wine."

Wine, you say? Absolutely. The commemorative blue sparkling wine that Citigold Private Clients received at a



private party this summer, which was to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Citibank. The Blanc de Bleu, a unique Californian sparkling wine with a subtle hint of blueberries, sparkled on the mahogany table like a well-cast sapphire. It was little wonder that the perfectly hued beverage was chosen to celebrate such a milestone in the bank's illustrious history.

Citigold Private Clients are also invited to various other functions, including a recent wine pairing event, the Citigold Private Client and Moët & Chandon Grand Vintage Dinner. The pre-launch event for the Grand Vintage 2004 treated Citigold Private Clients to exclusive tastings before the champagne trickled to the public. They also received pairing lessons from Andreas Larsson, chosen as Best Sommelier of the World in 2007.

As things wind down and Leung gets back to her busy day, we toast, smiles all round – and it's surely similar to the way many successful meetings conclude between Citigold Private Client and its relationship team. ■

**Clockwise From Left**  
Citigold Private Client director Maria Leung; Leung, poised as always to connect with clients; the recent Citigold Private Client and Moët & Chandon Grand Vintage Dinner was a resounding success