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# Tesco, Marks & Spencer Triumph Among U.K. Retailers for Wines

By Richard Vines - May 17, 2011 11:20 AM GMT+0100

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**Tesco Plc (TSCO)**, the U.K.'s biggest retailer, took most medals for its own-label wines in the International Wine Challenge, with 86, including two golds.

**Marks & Spencer Group Plc (MKS)** was second, with 61 medals, including three golds, the organizers of the annual London-based event said today in an e-mailed release. **J Sainsbury Plc (SBRY)** won 57, closely followed by Asda Group Plc with 56.

Denbies Wine Estate Chalk Ridge Rose was the only still rose to take gold, while **Chapel Down** took gold for its sparkling Rose Vintage Reserve Brut. A record 406 gold medals were awarded this year. Wines from 48 countries were entered.

"The increase in the number of medal winners is testament to the quality of the entries and it's great to see such a major success for English wines among such stiff competition," Tim Atkin, co-chairman of the International Wine Challenge, said.

More than 370 winemakers, merchants and writers from around the world took part in judging at the Barbican Centre, [London](#).

Details of award-winning wines will be published on the challenge's website <http://www.internationalwinechallenge.com>.

## Supermarket sparkling and Champagne medals include:

- Waitrose Champagne Brut NV (19.93 pounds recommended retail price) Gold
- Waitrose Champagne Blanc de Blancs NV (22.99 pounds) Silver
- Tesco Finest Premier Cru Champagne NV (£19.99 pounds) Gold
- Tesco Finest Vintage Champagne 2004 (25.99 pounds) Silver
- Sainsbury's Taste the Difference Vintage Champagne 2005 (25.99 pounds) Silver
- Sainsbury's Taste The Difference Prosecco Conegliano 2010 (10.49 pounds) Silver
- Marks & Spencer Herbert Beaufort NV (30 pounds) Gold
- Marks & Spencer Champagne Oudinot Vintage 2004 (28 pounds) Bronze
- Asda Extra Special Vintage Champagne 2002 (20.17 pounds) Gold

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Asda Asti NV (4.99 pounds) Silver

(Richard Vines is the chief food critic for Muse, the arts and leisure section of Bloomberg News. Opinions expressed are his own.)

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PAUL QUINN

## Thirsty Work

**WINE** connoisseur **PAUL QUINN**, from Barrow, is a member of the Association of Wine Educators and a judge at two of the most prominent wine competitions in the UK – the International Wines and Spirit Competition and The International Wine Challenge. This week he looks at matching wines to barbecues

**W**ITH the longer days and the lighter nights with us, what a lot of people will be doing is waiting for a hint of blue sky.

When the sun comes out the husbands will do their once-a-year special by cooking on the barbecue in the garden with friends, and it is sometimes difficult to know which wines to match with that unmistakable smell of burning charcoal.

There are no hard and fast rules when it comes to pairing wines with your basic burgers, steaks and ribs, but a general rule is that red wines go well with grilled meats, but these meats can be smokey, salty and can be sweeter due to sauces that you can put on to them.

Ultimately, it is your palate that you're seeking to please by the wine pairing. Barbecuing is a quick way to cook and seal all of the food's natural flavours. The high temperature of the grill will caramelise the sugars and fats which, in turn, will add sweetness to the finished dishes.

The wines that I would choose for this are

grown in hot climates that ripen easily and taste sweeter because they have more residual sugar than cool climates. Californian red Zinfandel will match to a lot of meats with ripe fruity tannins and acidity that can take the texture of the food to another level. South Africa's Pinotage is one of the only wines that have a barbecue aroma on the nose and palate. The south of France has Syrah, that has a black pepper, meaty, smokier aroma and spice that is an ideal accompaniment.

If you don't like white wines, try an 'un-oaked chardonnay. This will be an ideal match for grilled chicken or fish. Italian Pinot Grigio is a popular white wine for sausage, grilled pork or sardines. The crisp acidity and neutral aroma will cut through fat that most barbecued food has on it.

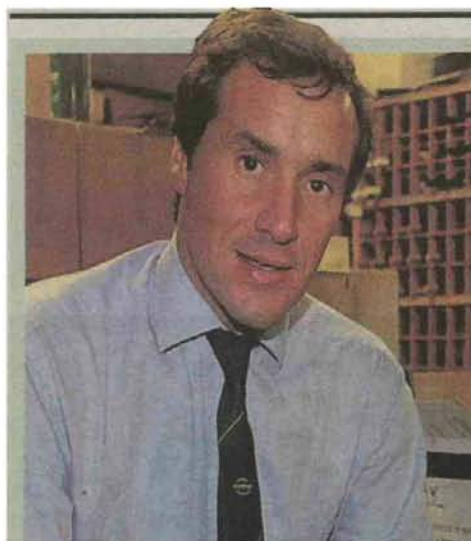
Two wines to try:

**Mas des Montagnes "Classic" Côtes du Roussillon Villages 2008 (£8.99, Majestic) (Grenache, 40% Syrah and 10% Carignan)**

Deep crimson in colour, this red has a bright raspberry and roasted meat aroma, which is savoury and intense. The palate has good concentration and is chunky and elegant, with fine tannins and great minerality. A fabulous pairing for grilled or barbecued lamb chops with thyme, rare steak and hard cheeses.

**Santa Helena Chardonnay 2010 (Asda £7.98), Chile**

Pale straw in colour. This wine has distinctive tropical fruit flavours and ripe citrus fruit on the nose. Off-dry with balanced acidity citrus, mango and peach, this wine is distinctive on the palate with a pleasant fruity finish and a light, buttery aftertaste. Would go well with burgers or grilled pork.



Keyword: International wine challenge

## Wine served at royal wedding bags top prize

n, May 18 (IANS) A wine served at the wedding of Prince William and Catherine has won the gold medal at the [International Wine Challenge](#).

The royal couple selected the Rose Brut wine from Chapel Down vineyard in Tenterden, Kent, for their wedding April 29. The drink costs 24.99 pounds per bottle, the Daily Express reported.

Frazer Thompson, chief executive at the vineyard, said: "We are very proud. It makes all the hard work worthwhile. Demand has never been higher and this accolade reinforces the quality of the wine that the team is producing."

"The award will also enhance our export business, especially in the US."

The wine won in the "sparkling rose" category. The contest was judged by 400 leading wine tasters, with points being awarded for variety, country, region and vintage.

Andrew Parley, the head winemaker, described the wine as a classic that "offers ripe berry and rhubarb flavours, and a nose of strawberry and raspberry with a splash of creaminess".

Chapel Down is Britain's largest producer of wines, with 500,000 bottles each year.

(United States)

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