

# Drinks

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## INTERNATIONAL

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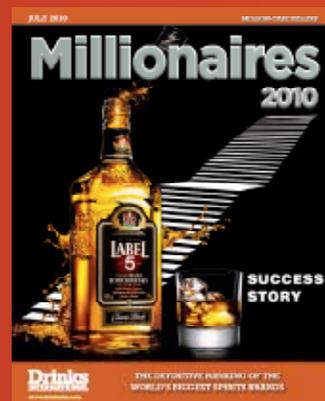


*Cachaça 51*

The cool spirit of Brazil

JULY 2010

**INSIDE  
THIS MONTH**



## MILLION-CASE SALES

ACCOMPANYING THIS ISSUE - DRINKS INTERNATIONAL'S ANNUAL MILLIONAIRES SUPPLEMENT

## COCKTAIL CHALLENGE

WINNING RECIPES FROM OUR COMPETITION



## ISC MEDALS

INTERNATIONAL SPIRITS CHALLENGE LATEST RESULTS

## LIQUEURS

LATEST ROUND-UP OF WHAT'S NEW



# Drinks INTERNATIONAL

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## The runners and riders

**I**t is that time of the year again: the publication of *Drinks International's* annual survey of million-case spirits brands. Every year it gets a little more comprehensive as new countries, companies and brands enter the fray.

The serious number-crunching has been done, for the third year, by Euromonitor International. I would like to pay a particular tribute to Jeremy Cunnington and his team for their fortitude and professionalism in collating, assessing and confirming as fair and accurate the sales/shipments data received, in good faith, from spirits producers.

With the soccer World Cup culminating this month, it is difficult – nay, impossible – to avoid a football analogy.

Looking at the various league tables with all the minuses due to the global economic downturn, one cannot help drawing a comparison with the early departure of football superbrands Italy and France from the FIFA competition. There is also the good showing of South America (think scotch). Then there has been the emergence of spritely Japan, Slovakia and Mexico (think Asia, central Europe and Central/South America in terms of drinks growth).

In spirits, our multinationals and global brands have taken a pasting. The likes of Johnnie Walker, Ballantine's, Chivas Regal, Smirnoff, Bacardi and Absolut, have all fared badly as consumers have switched to cheaper brands and/or voted with their feet by not using them to go out for a drink. These phenomena have resulted in local/domestic brands benefiting and being more resilient, while the "in-between" regionals have diminished significantly in number.

Brands moving up the league, such as Bagpiper, Label 5 or Cysta de Luxe, along with companies such as United Spirits and Stock, need to be viewed in a new light. There is also the emerging Soju/Shochu sector in Korea and Japan, which we in the west have failed to take seriously.

Be it Millionaires or football, the Old Guard, Ancien Régime, is under threat from a raft of newcomers – "upstarts" in the nicest possible way.



Christian Davis *Editor*



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Christian Davis leaves us with a lighter look at the drinks trade. Expect at least one yacht and a major sporting event...

## UK Budget skips alcohol

The UK Chancellor, George Osborne, has delivered the Conservative/Liberal Democrat's first budget, in which he did not increase tax on cigarettes or alcohol.

However, VAT is to rise to 20% from 17.5%, from January 4 2011.

The trade has welcomed the decision not to add more tax to alcohol and tobacco – the first time the government has frozen excise duty since 2001.

The former Labour government's plan to increase duty on cider by 10% above inflation will be scrapped.

The Scotch Whisky Association urged the government to press ahead with a review of the excise duty system, which is supposed to happen during the last quarter of 2010.

Wine & Spirit Trade Association chief executive Jeremy Beadles said: "The announcement provides some relief for a sector that has faced substantial tax increases in recent years. Repeated tax hikes have produced less revenue for the Treasury and punished responsible drinkers, while failing to tackle the problem of binge-drinking."

# Montana brand name replaced by Brancott

Pernod Ricard has decided to drop the Montana brand name and rename New Zealand's flagship Sauvignon Blanc Brancott Estate.

The decision follows intensive consumer research, according to Mathew Bird, marketing director for wines, Pernod Ricard UK.

Brancott is the name of the estate in Marlborough, on New Zealand's South Island, where Sauvignon Blanc grapes were first planted in 1975, the first harvest being 1979.

A key factor in changing the name of what is one of the best-known wine brands is probably that in the US the wine is already called Brancott Estate, to avoid US consumers thinking the wine may come from Montana state in the upper mid-west.



At the moment Montana (and Brancott) the brand sells 1.2 million 9-litre cases and accounts for 10% of New Zealand wine exports (12 months to July 2009). Exports account for 75% of total sales.

Bird told *Drinks International* that Pernod's commitment to the brand and the name change will be evidenced by its doubling of investment during the transition from Montana to Brancott Estate.

He said it will take the nascent brand into the top four UK wine brands, currently Jacob's Creek (also owned by Pernod Ricard), Blossom Hill (Diageo), Hardys (Constellation) and Wolf Blass (Foster's). The aim is to take the brand to 2

million cases annually.

It has also been announced that Brancott Estate will be the official sponsor of the Rugby World Cup, which takes place in New Zealand in September next year. The tournament is expected to be seen by a worldwide audience estimated at 4 billion, with 20 nations competing in 48 matches.

Pernod Ricard New Zealand managing director Fabian Partigiani said: "Our sponsorship of Rugby World Cup 2011 provides the perfect platform to help drive immediate global awareness of Brancott Estate as a leading New Zealand wine brand, particularly in key export markets such as the UK, Asia and Australia and, of course, our home market in New Zealand."

He added: "The name change from Montana to Brancott Estate will be rolled out globally from September 2010 to coincide with the impressive 2010 vintage."



Shutterstock

## Scotch whisky sales far outstrip Cognac among the French

More scotch whisky is sold in France in a month than cognac in a year, according to the Scotch Whisky Association.

The SWA said a 12% rise in exports in 2009 confirmed France as scotch whisky's largest market by volume, with the equivalent of 179m bottles shipped. Some five bottles of scotch are shipped to France every second. The association said scotch also outsells traditional anise-based drinks and accounts for more than a third of

the total French spirits market.

Industry figures for 2009 revealed the value of scotch whisky exports to France has more than doubled to £407m over the past decade, with scotch whisky accounting for around a quarter of all Scottish exports to the market.

Gavin Hewitt, chief executive of the SWA, said: "Last year was a record one for scotch whisky distillers in what has become our largest market by volume."

## News In Brief

Industry stories from around the globe

Estonian alcohol producer AS Liviko has acquired 50% of Japanese import and distribution company Hanza Trading. AS Liviko has undertaken to invest 50 million yen in the business. The parties are not disclosing the amount of the transaction.

**Drinks International has launched an International Cider Challenge to find the best ciders and perries in the world. See [website drinksint.com](http://www.drinksint.com) for more information.**

Bombay Sapphire gin is to launch a global digital campaign, aimed at the social media market. Consumers will be encouraged to build an image of themselves in the form of a mosaic compiled from pictures that reflect different aspects of their lives.

**Around 16,000 road-traffic injuries and 170 deaths in Britain could be prevented in the first year if the government lowers the blood-alcohol limit for drivers, according to a new study of the drink-drive laws in the UK.**

## Producers welcome lower NZ harvest

The 2010 New Zealand grape harvest totalled 266,000 tonnes – 19,000 tonnes less than the 2009 crop and in line with the pre-harvest forecast.

The pre-harvest forecast suggested a grape intake of between 265,000 and 285,000 tonnes from a producing area estimated to have been 33,200 hectares – up 2,000ha on 2009.

New Zealand Winegrowers chief executive, Philip Gregan, said the vintage represented another step forward for grape growers and wineries as they respond to market challenges.

“Most importantly, this year’s vintage quality should be excellent,” Gregan said.

“Although the harvest was slightly later than last year, wonderful weather in March and April, combined with lower yields ensure superb fruit was delivered into wineries. Above all else, this confirms the industry’s focus on, and commitment to quality.”

Gregan said: “Growers and wineries will also welcome the smaller vintage. A reduced harvest was planned for by many growers and wineries, as a combination of supply imbalances over the past two years and the global recession have created some real challenges for producers.

“The smaller vintage will assist in the re-balancing and recovery of the sector over the next year or so.”



Carrick

## New corporate identity for Lanson in the UK

In its 250th anniversary year, Champagne Lanson is changing its corporate identity in the UK, renaming its operations Lanson International UK.

The move follows the name-change in June this year of Lanson’s parent company, from Boizel Chanoine Champagne to Lanson-BCC. This was designed to reflect the group’s focus on the Lanson champagne brand in international markets.

Lanson International UK will now reshape its UK strategy with a three-tiered offering to include the non-malolactic Champagne Lanson as the “perfect aperitif”; the Besserat de Bellefon Cuvée des Moines range, blended to accompany food; and the full-bodied Champagne Tsarine range as a celebration pouring fizz.

# Million-case spirits revealed in 2010 list

The 2010 Drinks International Millionaires research has been compiled. Based on sales volumes for 2009, this year saw a record number of brands on the list – 162.

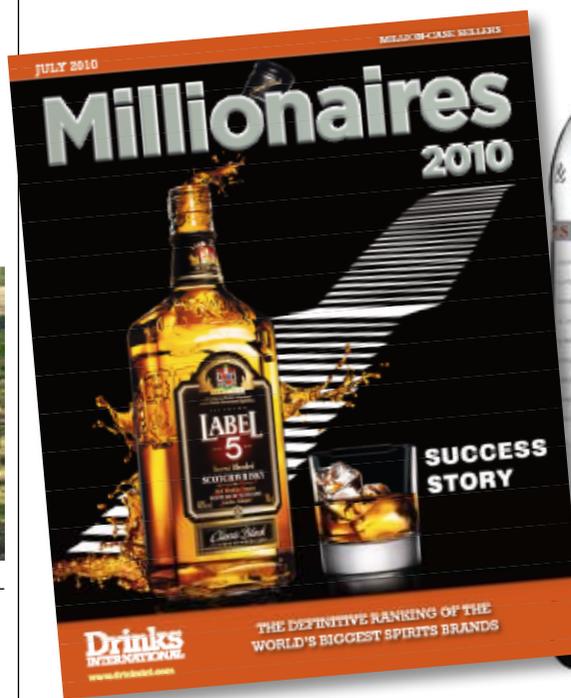
The list features 18 new brand entries, nine new companies, and Turkey and Colombia are represented for the first time.

Pernod Ricard remains the company with the highest number of brands in the Millionaires rankings, while United Spirits is increasingly a force to be reckoned with as the spirits market in India continues to forge ahead in all sectors.

Whisky is top of the pops when it comes to the

category with the most brands on the list, at 46, but it is tailed closely by vodka, with 43.

To find out which brands top the tables, see the Millionaires supplement with this issue.



## Foster’s seals US distribution deal

Foster’s Wine Estates has announced long-term distribution agreements with Southern Wine & Spirits in three US markets.

Southern Wine & Spirits will gain exclusive rights to sell Foster’s global portfolio of wines in California, Illinois and Florida.

Southern currently distributes Foster’s wines in these states but has shared the portfolio

with other distributors and Foster’s own self-distribution.

The five-year agreements mark the completion of phase one of Foster’s route to market initiative, launched after its wine review last year.

Foster’s managing director Stephen Brauer said: “We look forward to continuing our strong partnership with Southern under these new

agreements that will deliver superior performance in each of these key states.”

Wayne Chaplin, president & chief operating officer of Southern Wine & Spirits of America commented: “We look forward to partnering with Foster’s to realise their route to market goals of sustainable brand growth, in-market execution and portfolio premiumisation.”

## Appointments

The Charmer Sunbelt Group (CSG) has announced several appointments.

**Greg Baird**, currently executive vice-president, sales and marketing, is promoted to chief operating officer. **Bob Catalani**, currently president/chief executive, beverage distributors in Colorado, is promoted to vice president, sales, reporting to Baird. In addition to these appointments at its corporate office, there are several promotions across CSG's multi-state network: In Connecticut, **Andrew Hillman**, currently president, Connecticut distributors (CDI), is appointed chairman, CDI. Replacing Hillman as president will be **Brian Albenze**, currently CSG's director of business development for Diageo/Moët Hennessey. In Colorado, **Joe Marotta** is promoted to president, beverage distributors. In Florida, **Tim Sullivan**, currently CSG's director of business development for Bacardi, is promoted to general manager, alliance division at Premier Beverage Company.

The Edrington Group has appointed **Matthew Turner** brand controller for Highland Park. Previously marketing controller with The Macallan single malt



Scotch whisky, Turner joined The Edrington Group in 2002 having held marketing positions with Imperial Tobacco, the BBC and Bass. The

Highland Park portfolio is distributed globally, with key markets being the UK, US, global travel retail and the Nordics.

Rémy Cointreau US has appointed **Philippe Roederer**

(right) senior vice president, marketing, and **Nicolas Hériard Dubreuil** director of digital marketing. Roederer has previously held executive positions at Allied Domeq and Financière Moulin de Champagne. Hériard Dubreuil will be responsible for the development of digital marketing platforms for all Rémy Cointreau USA brands.



Diageo has announced changes to its global marketing department following a review of its structure. **David Gates**, currently global brand director for Johnnie Walker, will become global category director - whisk(e)y. Latin America & Caribbean (LAC) marketing and innovation director **Edward Pilkington** is to become global category director - vodka, gin and rums. Diageo's Reserve brand group, managed by **Rodolphe Paoli**, will now also report directly to **Andy Fennell**, chief marketing officer for Diageo.

E&J Gallo has announced staff changes within the European sales team. In the UK, **Mark Stammers** has been promoted to UK grocery channel controller. **Andy**

**White** has been promoted to national account manager, impulse channel, and will manage accounts including Makro and Palmer & Harvey. **Charles Yates** has moved to become national account manager, on-trade, and will be responsible for WaverleyTBS, Mitchells & Butler and E&J Gallo's latest on-trade partner, Molson Coors. **Mark Tinsley** (right), regional sales director UK & Ireland has expanded his responsibilities to take on accountability for the Middle East and African markets. Finally, **Nick Elkin** has been promoted to regional sales director for western Europe, responsible for Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands. (See profile, page 14)



Beam Global has created a new marketing position for its Maker's Mark brand. **Kelly Doss** has been appointed vice president global marketing. She will report directly to Maker's Mark president Bill Samuels.

United Wineries has appointed a new commercial director to its UK team to bolster its Spanish and Italian imports. **John Leech** comes from Boutinot (Meridian Wines), where he was responsible for the specialised Italian and Iberian division as sole senior national accounts manager, looking after brands such as Italia.

## DIARY

### TFWA World

**October 17-20**  
Cannes, France  
tfwa.com

### SIAL

**October 17-21**  
Paris, France  
sial.fr

### Mondial de la Bière

**October 22-24**  
Strasbourg, Alsace  
festivalmondialbiere.qc.ca

### Megavino & Megaspirts

**October 22-25**  
Brussels, Belgium  
megavino.be

### Wine for Asia

**October 28-29**  
Singapore, Sands Expo Center  
wineforasia.com

### Hong Kong Int. W&S Fair

**November 4-6**  
HK Convention Centre  
hkwinefair.hktdc.com

### Brau Beviale

**November 10-12**  
Nuremberg, Germany  
brau-beviale.de

### Middle East Duty Free Conference

**November 23-24**  
Dubai  
tfwa.com

### Millésime Bio

**January 24-26**  
Montpellier, France  
millesime-bio.com

### Taste (India)

**February 3-5 2011**  
Bombay Expo Centre  
taste-expo.com

### Duty Free Show of the Americas

**March 20-24 2011**  
Orlando, Florida, US  
iaadfs.org

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## Humphreys in shock Diageo departure

One of the leading lights of the duty free liquor business has announced his shock departure from the industry.

In late May Diageo Global Travel & Middle East (GTME) managing director Phil Humphreys announced he was to leave his position to take up a senior role at Dubai-based Coca-Cola SABCO after only two years in the job.

Despite his short tenure, Humphreys will be widely remembered within the trade for raising the profile of the duty free liquor category both within the industry and within Diageo.

Shortly after his appointment in July 2008, he pledged to double the size of the duty free and travel retail liquor business to \$12bn by 2013.

Although the global credit crunch hampered Diageo GTME achieving this goal, Humphreys did leave his mark, introducing standard trading terms with operators with built-in incentives to earn more, and staging global promotions such as last year's Formula One-driven centenary celebrations for Johnnie Walker Black Label.

He was also a passionate supporter of airport retailers, suppliers and airport authorities working more closely together to deliver higher sales penetration rates.

"Phil leaves the business in great shape," said Diageo International president Christian Fletcher. "Its role and strategy are clear; its ambitions are massively energising and, through its commitment to building amazing relationships with retail customers, airport authorities and other partners, it has started to transform travel-retail."

"I have already started the search for an outstanding leader who can take GTME on to even greater things."

# Belfast airport WDF gains liquor licence



George Best Belfast City airport's refurbished departures shop is able to sell liquor for the first time after securing a liquor licence.

Autogrill-owned operator World Duty Free (WDF) opened a new expanded 2,126sq ft shop at the airport in May as part of a major programme to convert stores previously operated into WDF-branded outlets. (Autogrill bought Alpha Retail in 2007).

About 370sq ft in the new shop has been allocated to wines and spirits with a major focus on Irish whiskeys such as Northern Ireland single malt brand Bushmills, Jameson, Tyrconnell and Tullamore Dew.

However, local licensing laws require this area to be located in a separate gated area—something WDF has never had to do before at one of its outlets.

"As we didn't sell liquor before in the old Alpha shop we aren't able to comment if having the liquor sectioned off has made a difference to sales," commented



WDF corporate communications officer Sophie Oliver. "We can say that now we have a liquor category in Belfast airport though that it is taking its rightful place in the rankings of sales within the store and is selling very well."

The new WDF shop is part of £6m package of terminal enhancements at Belfast City, which also includes a new

Bushmills whiskey bar, which is operated by travel catering firm HMSHost.

Meanwhile WDF's UK regional airport store conversion programme continues – a new WDF outlet opened at Bournemouth airport last month. The retailer is also launching a new World of Whiskies outlet at Edinburgh airport this month.

## South African Stables winery makes country's airport debut

As the 2010 FIFA World Cup got underway last month, family-owned South African winery The Stables Wine Estate opened the country's first airport wine shop at the newly opened Durban King Shaka International airport.

The 50sq m Stables Wine Estate Airport Cellar store is located in the airport's pre-security retail area, which is expected to attract meeters and greeters, as well as departing passengers.

The outlet sells not only its own wines, but also those from other farms and wineries in the local KwaZulu-Natal region such as Groot Constantia, Waterford, Backsberg, Rust & Vrede and Haute Cabriere.

"We will be holding wine tastings and

introducing the general public to food and wine pairings in a relaxed, user-friendly way," said winery founder and owner Tiny van Niekerk.

"The old Durban airport boasted the largest number of 'meets and greets' in the country and the new King Shaka airport will serve approximately 7.5m people per annum.

"In the absence of having a network of sales and marketing agents overseas, this provides a great opportunity for us to get the Stables Wine Estate brand out into the marketplace both locally and abroad."

The Stables Wine Estate owns a 27ha vineyard in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands and has pioneered the production of wine in the local region, winning national awards for its Sauvignon Blanc and Pinotage wines.

## In Brief

New traffic figures from Airports Council International (ACI) reveal the full impact of April's volcanic ash cloud crisis on Europe's airports. Passenger traffic in Europe dropped 14% in April compared with the same month in 2009. Traffic in North America was also affected, dipping 1%.

Aldeasa Vancouver broke its sales record last month by selling a rare 1.5-litre bottle of Rémy Martin Louis XIII cognac for C\$34,000 to a Chinese couple.



Heineken Duty Free & Travel Retail started to roll out a new design for its beer cans, glasses and bottles last month. The company claims the new can design features an industry first—tangible ink and a 360-degree curve on the outside, which aim to give a more pleasant tactile experience for the drinker. The new glass also has a looping curve on the outside and a thicker base for better stability.

Fruit purée brand Funkin has launched a cocktail mixer pack with UK airport retailer World Duty Free. The new Funkin Bacardi Mojito five-pack is the company's first product to be listed in travel retail.

The Edrington Group is set to release a new addition to the travel retail exclusive The Macallan 1824 Collection. The Macallan Oscuro will be a rich-flavoured, dark-coloured single malt solely matured in Spanish sherry oak casks.

# Golf star's icewine lands at Toronto



Canadian golf star Mike Weir's icewine brand has made its duty free debut with The Nuance Group at Toronto international airport.

Nuance will sell Mike Weir Icewine at the airport for an exclusive six-month period.

Profits from sales of the brand, which was launched by the eight-times former PGA champion in 2005, go to his children's charity, The Mike Weir Foundation, which has raised C\$5m for good causes since its

inception in 2004.

"To offer a Canadian-made product by an internationally known Canadian professional for a great cause, just makes sense," said The Nuance Group North America chief executive Dick Rendek.

"To offer our customer this opportunity in the form of one of the best-selling products we have, makes great business sense."

Diageo Global Travel and Middle East (GTME) is the exclusive duty free distributor of Mike Weir Wines.



# Louis XIII ready for its close-up

Rémy Cointreau Global Travel Retail has opened a new Rémy Martin Louis XIII display area at World Duty Free's (WDF) liquor store at London Heathrow Terminal 5.

A dedicated wallbay has been created for the ultra-premium cognac, which is lit to highlight the brand's Baccarat decanter. The centrepiece of the new display is an opaque black crystal decanter

of Louis XIII Rare Cask, one of 786 bottles to be produced. The only other airports in Europe to stock this rare cognac, which is a blend of 1,200 eaux-de-vie drawn from a single cask, are Paris Charles de Gaulle airport and the private jet terminal of Moscow's Vnukovo airport.

Rémy Martin Louis XIII is now displayed in all five of Heathrow's Terminals.



# Dubai International airport wine shops report sales upturn

Luxury wine and spirits retailer Le Clos has reported a strong upturn in sales at its two outlets at Dubai international's Terminal 3 over the first five months of 2010.

The company revealed that weekly sales of famous fine French wines from the acclaimed 1982 vintage such as Lafite Rothschild, Château Cheval Blanc, Château Petrus and Château d'Yquem were at record levels. And in February this year the operator achieved its highest single sale transaction, a rare magnum of Château Latour 1947, but declined to reveal the exact price paid.

"During May this year Le Clos successfully

launched its 2009 Bordeaux En Primeur campaign with fantastic initial orders for this historic vintage," said Donna Williamson, marketing services manager at Le Clos parent company, drinks importer and distributor Maritime Mercantile International (MMI). "It is a true indication of the passion there is for fine wine in the region and of the success of the Le Clos concept."

She added that collectors were helping to drive up sales of the retailer's rare single malt range. Recent sales have included three bottles of The Macallan Lalique 55 Year Old, of which only 420 bottles were made.

**TURBO**



## ARBEG SUPERNOVA

**BRAND OWNER** LVMH (the Glenmorangie Company)  
**PRICE** £80, US\$117, €96  
**MARKETS** Global  
**CONTACT** Claire Li  
+44 20 7245 4283

The Glenmorangie Company has unveiled a second edition of its turbo charged Islay single malt scotch whisky, Ardbeg Supernova - SN2010.

It is a limited edition release, with what is described as "explosive smoky flavours and very high peating level, some 40% more peaty than the distillery's renowned and already very heavily peated flagship - Ardbeg 10 Year Old".

The first Supernova in 2009 was sold out in under two hours, says the company. SN2010 boasts a higher abv of at 60.1% and a deeper, earthier character.

**POT STILL**

## TULLAMORE DEW BLACK 43

**BRAND OWNER** C&C International  
**PRICE** €18.50  
**MARKETS** Czech Republic and Bulgaria initially  
**CONTACT** Stock (Czech Republic)

Tullamore Dew Black 43 is a new premium Irish whiskey blend from C&C. Triple-distilled and said to be enriched by spicy pot still whiskey aged in old Oloroso

sherry casks, the '43' denotes alcoholic strength.

The Czech Republic will get it first as it has brand leadership through distributor Stock Spirits.

It will be launched initially in the Czech on-trade but will be available in other markets thereafter.

The matt-black labeling and silver foil has been designed to give it a "masculine and sophisticated personality".

The taste is described as "mellow spicy and sweet with notes of sherry and Christmas cake.

"More intense than standard Tullamore Dew."



**CAN DO**



## ERISTOFF & COLA

**BRAND OWNER** Bacardi-Martini  
**PRICE** £1.85, €2.20  
**MARKETS** Europe  
**CONTACT** Jonathan Dennys: jdennys@bacardi.com

Bacardi-Martini has put its Eristoff vodka into a pre-mix 25cl can format aimed at 18 to 24-year-old males, drinking at home, who want a convenient, perfectly-made vodka & cola (7% abv).

Eristoff is a 100% grain, triple-distilled, charcoal-filtered, French-made vodka which claims to be the market leading vodka brand in France, Austria and Portugal with 1.8 million cases sold annually.

## SPICED UP

### ELEMENTS 8 BARREL INFUSED SPICED RUM

**BRAND OWNER** Elements 8 Rum Co  
**PRICE** £29.99-£34.99  
**MARKETS** UK  
**CONTACT** e8rum.com

Elements 8 is seeking to create a "new tier" of premium spiced rum, with its Barrel Infused Spiced Rum. Aimed at style bars and top-end retailers, Spiced is claimed to have been 18 months in development and made from fruits and spices that are 100% natural and indigenous to St Lucia. They comprise: cinnamon, ginger, clove, star anise, vanilla, honey, nutmeg, orange, lemon and coconut.



## CLOUDY BAY RIESLING 2006

**BRAND OWNER** LVMH (Moët Hennessy)  
**PRICE** £22 NZ\$37 AU\$ 39  
**MARKETS** New Zealand, Australia, UK  
**CONTACT** Cathryn Stockdale  
+44 207 2454 3

Moët Hennessy has announced the first parcel of Cloudy Bay Riesling.

The winemakers have been making a late harvest Riesling for nearly a decade. In 1999, it was decided to produce a dry style.

2003 was the first official launch of the dry Riesling, confined to New Zealand and Australia. The 2006 is the first vintage to go outside, coming to the UK.



**DRY STYLE**



## HIGH STRENGTH CHOICE

### FOXIDENTON LONDON DRY GIN 48%

**BRAND OWNER** Foxdenton Estate Company

**PRICE** £23.40 €28

**MARKETS** Europe

**CONTACT** Jo Simpson +44 1394 380972

Foxdenton London Dry Gin 48% is said to be the response from two drinks enthusiasts to a lack of high strength choices among gins.

Nick Radclyffe and John Simpson went to botanical alchemist and gin distiller supremo, Charles Maxwell at Thames Distillers in London.

Radclyffe said: "We like gin; we want to know it's there when we first put that dew-laden, ice-filled glass to our lips and smell the citrus rising as though from a Spanish orchard with the tonic bubbles fizzing to the surface."

They submitted 48% to a blind tasting for *The Spectator* magazine and apparently it came joint second.

"Not bad for a couple of blokes in a shed," according to Simpson.

It is described as a "traditional, London dry. Juniper, coriander seed and angelica rose with citrus burst leads to an equally traditional, clean palate with orris root, violet and lime zest notes."

## LIMITED EDITION

### TIO PEPE EN RAMA

**BRAND OWNER**

Gonzalez Byass

**PRICE** £11.99

**MARKETS** UK-only

**CONTACT** Andrew

Sinclair: asinclair@

gonzalezbyassuk.com

Gonzalez Byass, the premium table wine and sherry producer, has launched a limited-edition Tio Pepe sherry to celebrate the company's 175th anniversary.

There are only 175 bottles of Tio Pep En Rama, which is lightly filtered, unclarified, Tio Pepe fino sherry, taken from the middle of the cask during spring when the flor from the yeast is at its thickest.



## PIECE OF CAKE

### STIFFY'S JAFFA CAKE VODKA DRINK

**BRAND OWNER** VC2

**PRICE** £15.95, €24.99 (€19.00 on promotion)

**MARKETS** Europe

**CONTACT** graham.coull@vc-2.com

VCS says following the success of Stiffy's Kola Kubez, it is now

launching a bright orange Jaffa Cake-flavoured vodka drink.

The Scottish company, which started out as Stiffy's Shots, says the 20% abv drink has a "brilliantly fragrant and distinctive flavour of Jaffa Cakes to give the drink a smack of tangy orange and the lip-licking after-taste of dark chocolate".



### VIÑALBA RESERVE MALBEC/TOURIGA NACIONAL

BLEND

**BRAND OWNER**

Buckingham Schenk/Domaine Vistalba

**PRICE** £9.99

**MARKETS** UK

**CONTACT** Nicola Pattison:

Nicola@buckingham-schenk

Buckingham Schenk, a leading UK wine importer 75% owned by major European wine company Schenk, has added to its Viñalba Argentinian wine brand range. Viñalba Reserva Malbec/Touriga Nacional is a blend of Argentine Malbec from award-winning winemaker Hervé Joyaux Fabre from Viñalba, while the Touriga Nacional was made by Portuguese Winemaker of the Year Rui Reguinga. Fabre and Reguinga are long-standing friends.



### BELVEDERE PINK GRAPEFRUIT

**BRAND OWNER** LVMH (Moët Hennessy)

**PRICE** £29.99, US\$44

**MARKETS** UK, US, Canada

**CONTACT** sonia.herschtel@mhuk.co.uk

Pink Grapefruit is the latest flavour for Belvedere, the Polish vodka brand owned by LVMH.

The 40% abv flavoured vodka has whole pink grapefruit from Argentina along with fresh ginger and lemons. It says no sugars, glycerine or artificial additives are used.

The company recommends using it with cranberry juice, tonic water or cola. Luxury retailers and style bars and members' clubs, are the target.

The launch is celebrated by a new collaboration with haute couture designer Matthew Williamson, who has designed a limited-edition sheer pink summer kaftan.



## FRUITY

### INFORMATION

Products launched within the last two months are eligible for inclusion within this section. Please submit your products for consideration to:

christian.davis@drinkint.com

# The tap on the **SHOULDER**

**There are times when a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do. Bill Roberts recently took over E&J Gallo winery's European, Middle East and African operation. Christian Davis meets the man**

**I**T HAS BEEN A TOUGH TIME FOR MANY companies and people, and it is far from over yet. E&J Gallo, the California-based second-largest wine company in the world bit the bullet and dramatically downsized its London-based EMEA (Europe, Middle East & Africa) operation.

Outgoing vice-president and general manager George Marsden called 2009 "a perfect storm" and, in reducing the operation to concentrating on just five core brands – plus pulling out of the London International Wine Trade Fair – he announced the unit was "fit for purpose".

Unveiling the dramatic changes at Gallo's traditional annual briefing to fairly gobsmacked journalists in London, Marsden mentioned, in passing, that his successor was in the room. One wonders what went through his mind as Marsden explained the rationale for the consolidation (see appointments, page 8).

Anyway, the ebullient, irresistibly enthusiastic Marsden left the country, returning to the US to run a Gallo operation out of his native Philadelphia.

It took a few months to track the new man down but *Drinks International* is nothing if not tenacious. Enter Bill Roberts – the new vice-president and general manager for E&J Gallo EMEA.

Roberts is 47 years old and married with three teenage girls. He's another Gallo "lifer" – 23 years with the company, primarily in sales and marketing. But he has also been a part of the rigid US three-tier system, working with the all-important, omnipotent wholesalers.

Quite different to Marsden, who was all high energy, garrulous and heart-on-the-sleeve passion, Roberts is quieter, more laid back. He grew up in Ohio, getting a business degree from the

university in 1986, and he has lived all over the US – Los Angeles, Dallas, New Orleans, Atlanta, Florida.

Before departing the States, Roberts had been leading the Gallo sales team responsible for the south east region of the US. Asked where he likes best, he cites Florida and Georgia (Atlanta).

"I like Atlanta. It has a lot of people in corporate offices so it is good for culture and you can get up into the North Carolina mountains in two hours where it is very tranquil and peaceful," says Roberts.

You sense that he is less a metro man, more a backwoods man. His hobbies? Golf, sailing, hiking and skiing. So there you have it. His wife, Christine, is an avid runner and wants to do the London marathon.

Having relocated with their 13-year-old to England where the EMEA office is, they decided they should live in London.

"We had been living in the suburbs in the US but we decided we wanted to live in the city. Primarily, we were looking at schools. We looked at Denham, Gerrards Cross, Uxbridge but we felt a need to live in the city. So we chose Hampstead as it has a village atmosphere. It is 17 miles from the office."

## **International experience**

So how did Roberts get the call to the UK? "I was in Modesto (Gallo's home town in California) last October at the Doubletree Hilton hotel for a meeting. I had a tap on the shoulder from Steve Sprinkle, vice-president of domestic sales.

"He said: 'I've had a thought. Where do you envisage your career going?' He suggested I need international experience and asked if I'd like to take over from George in looking after Europe,



the Middle East & Africa."

"I called Christine and said: 'When I get home there is something I want to talk about.'"

Roberts smiles at the recollection. With the number of moves they have already made, it is obvious his wife has heard these words before.

"I was 100% ready to go but I was not going to go unless my wife was 100% supportive. I thought she might be 50:50 but no, she was OK."

The EMEA business is primarily Europe and, within that, mostly UK.

The rationalisation has taken place and Roberts' job now is to consolidate and move the business forward, focusing on the five core brands: Gallo Family Vineyards, Turning Leaf, Redwood Creek, Carlo Rossi and Barefoot.

Carlo Rossi is a huge brand in Poland – a



**THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF DOMESTIC SALES ASKED IF I'D LIKE TO TAKE OVER LOOKING AFTER EUROPE**



**Cocktail time**

- Gallo Rosito**  
**1/ Tall glass filled halfway with ice cubes or crushed ice**  
**2/ Add a handful of juicy mixed berries - raspberries, strawberries, blueberries**  
**3/ Fill two-thirds with Gallo Family Vineyards White Grenache**  
**4/ Top up with chilled ginger ale**  
**5/ serve with a sprig of mint or a wedge of lime**  
**6/ Sit back and enjoy**

*gallorose.co.uk*



Barefoot Wine has an affiliation with UK beach volleyball

country of nearly 40 million souls who drink about half a litre of wine a year per capita. So, plenty to fight for there.

Gallo Family Vineyards is the flagship for Gallo and the opportunity there is to capitalise on people's taste for rosé (see panel above for Rosito, Gallo's wine-based cocktail).

Turning Leaf is Gallo's premium wine brand and is being given an aspirational position aligning it with fashion. Redwood Creek is aimed at people probably like Roberts, with a penchant for the outdoors.

The big one is Barefoot, which is now the largest brand in the US. The company and Roberts have high hopes for this quirky brand with a hippy name. It has overtaken Yellowtail in the US and Roberts hopes, and believes, it will

hit 10 million cases "in the next few years" to become a truly global brand.

Asked what he likes to drink Roberts replied: "I really enjoy Malbec. From living in Florida, I like shellfish so Pinot Grigio, Torrontes and Albarinho."

Recently Gallo shipped its first containers to South Africa, just in time for the football World Cup. The containers held GFV, Barefoot and, interestingly, brandy. South Africans being huge consumers of brandy, almost exclusively domestic spirit, the company has seen an opportunity.

So for Roberts this is the next big adventure. He doesn't believe he'll have much time for golf or sailing but hopefully he and his wife will be able to do some hiking, if only on Hampstead Heath with a bottle of Redwood Creek. **DI**

This month we reveal the top performers among this year's entries in the International Spirits Challenge Liqueurs & Specialities and Tequila categories

# A world of difference

**W**ith its huge diversity of styles, flavours and textures, Liqueurs & Specialities is arguably the most demanding category for the International Spirits Challenge judging panel.

At one minute you can be looking at a clear, citrus based spirit designed for mixing in cocktails, then there'll be a flight of dairy based liqueurs followed by the herbal complexity of some monastic digestifs.

To look at it another way, Liqueurs & Specialities combines the experience and tradition of the French and the Dutch, with a strong streak of innovation and product development. Enough to make for a long day of

lively discussion among this year's five ISC judges (pictured below).

With the stylistic variation even within individual categories, the judges were unable in some instances to separate a clear favourite of one type.

The whisky-based liqueurs, for example, were well liked, but the judges were torn between the "whisky notes" of one compared to the "more herbal" attributes of another.

Crème de Cassis is well known to produce the most intense, explosive of fruit liqueurs and always performs well in the ISC.

But this year the ranks of Liqueurs & Specialities Golds were joined by the classic French herbal Chartreuse and a new player from the States, Babco's Beaux Jangles, flavoured with

black tea and lemon. In each case, the judges were immediately struck by the depth, complexity and balance of the liquid.

"Great length in the mouth," commented one judge of the Beaux Jangles, while of the Green Chartreuse, chairman Patrick van Zuidam added: "This was something we all liked straight away."

The Tequila category was judged by the White Spirits panel (see June 2010 issue). Chairman Ian Wisniewski said that, in the case of Blanco styles, the judges were looking for: "The range and balance of flavours, and the level of sweetness, as well as considering the weight on the palate, whether a more elegant or a fuller-bodied style."

And for the aged Tequila styles,

judging was based on: "How the original agave character, such as vegetal, earthy, spice notes interacted with the influence of oak ageing, such as vanilla, oak notes, dryness etc, and the overall balance between these two elements."

After some strict assessment based on these provisos, Borco's Sierra Reposado emerged as the panel's clear favourite, while William Grant's Milagro label put in a very consistent showing in the Silver medals.

This year's Trophy winners will be revealed at the International Spirits Challenge awards dinner at the Marriott Grosvenor Square hotel, London, in November. Contact [jo.morley@drinksint.com](mailto:jo.morley@drinksint.com) for enquiries.



**Chairman: Patrick van Zuidam, master distiller & MD, Zuidam Distillers**



**Adeline Loizeau, Cognac quality manager, Grand Marnier**



**Gérard Chaussée, general manager, Pagès Védrenne Distillery**



**Matthijs Jansen, senior adviser R&D, QC and QA, De Kuyper Royal Distilleries**



**Peter Hallgarten Specialist blending consultant**

# ISC: Liqueurs & Specialities

## GOLD

### Liqueurs - cassis

**Merlet Crème de Cassis** - Distillerie Merlet & Fils  
**Supercassis** - Pagès Védrenne

### Liqueurs - herbal

**Green Chartreuse** - c/o Fells

### Other liqueurs & specialities

**Beaux Jangles Iced Tea Vodka Liqueur** - Babco Europe

## SILVER

### Liqueurs - cassis

**Crème de Cassis Pagès Premium** - Pagès Védrenne

### Liqueurs - citrus fruit

**Cointreau** - Rémy Cointreau

### Liqueurs - crème/fruit

**Merlet Poire** - Distillerie Merlet & Fils

### Liqueurs - brandy based

**Gran Gala** - Stock Spirits Group

### Liqueurs - whisky based

**Drambuie** - The Drambuie Liqueur Co  
**Glayva** - Whyte and Mackay  
**The Royal Legacy of 1745** - The Drambuie Liqueur Co

### Liqueurs - herbal

**Bénédictine DOM** - c/o First Drinks Brands  
**Oude Meester Peppermint Liqueur** - Distell

### Bitters

**Original Radeberger Bitter** - Waldemar Behn



## BRONZE

### Liqueurs - berry fruit

**Crème de Framboise Védrenne** - Pagès Védrenne  
**XO Cherry Brandy Liqueur** - De Kuyper

### Liqueurs - cassis

**Gabriel Boudier Crème de Cassis** - Gabriel Boudier

### Liqueurs - citrus fruit

**Gabriel Boudier Bartender Triple Sec** - Gabriel Boudier

**Lemon Z Limoncello** - Lemon Z

**Limonce Limoncello** - Stock Spirits Group

### Liqueurs - crème/fruit

**Merlet Peche** - Distillerie Merlet & Fils

### Liqueurs - coffee/chocolate

**Beveland Crème de Café** - Beveland  
**Triibe Celtic Liqueur** - The Reformed Spirits Company

### Liqueurs - rum based

**Cocobay** - Aldi (c/o Weber Shandwick)

### Liqueurs - whisky based

**Irish Mist** - C&C International

### Liqueurs - Irish cream/dairy

**Carolans Irish Cream** - C&C International

**Taste the Difference Irish Cream Liqueur** - Sainsbury's

### Liqueurs - herbal

**Green Nines** - Stumbras AB

**Killepitsch Premium Herbal Liqueur** - Peter Busch Likoerfabrik

**Bitters**

**Fernet Stock Citrus** - Stock Spirits Group

### Other liqueurs & specialities

**Armilar Amaretto** - Lidl UK

**Disaronno Amaretto** - Illva Saronno

**Frangelico** - C&C International

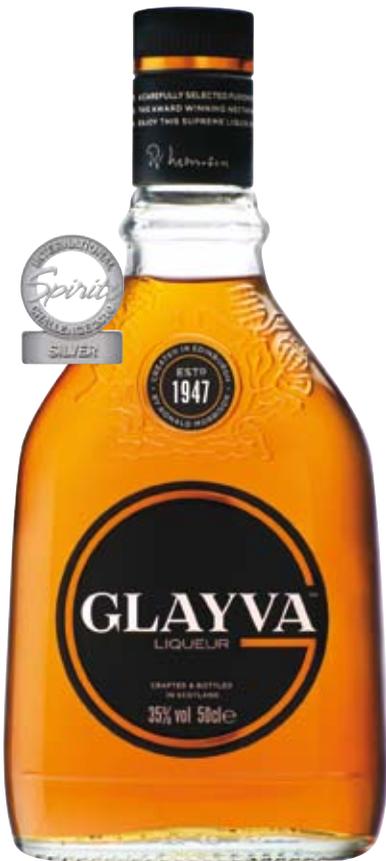
**The King's Ginger** - BB&R Spirits

### Specialities - anis/absinthe

**La Fée Parisienne** - La Fée

**Sambuca 313 Pallini** - Pallini Internazionale





## COMMENDED

### Liqueurs – berry fruit

**Gabriel Boudier Bartender Cherry Brandy** – Gabriel Boudier

**Serenade Cherry Liqueur** – Lidl UK

### Liqueurs – cassis

**Crème de Cassis Bio** – Pagès Védrenne

### Liqueurs – citrus fruit

**Merlet C2 Cognac & Citron** – Distillerie Merlet & Fils

**Luxardo Limoncello** – Girolamo Luxardo

**Merlet Triple Sec** – Distillerie Merlet & Fils

### Liqueurs – fruit other

**Chase Elderflower Liqueur** – Williams Chase Distillery

**Gabriel Boudier Bartender Apricot Brandy** – Gabriel Boudier

**Oscar's Peach Schnapps** – Aldi (c/o Weber Shandwick)

**Prucia Plum Liqueur de France** – Suntory Liquors Limited

**Pomegranate Liqueur** – Pagès Védrenne

### Liqueurs – coffee/chocolate

**After Supreme Coffee** – After Supreme Liqueurs

**Mozart Black Chocolate Pure 87** – Mozart Distillerie

### Liqueurs – cream/dairy

**After Belgian Chocolate Liqueur** – After Supreme Liqueurs

**After Ivory Belgian Chocolate Liqueur** – After Supreme Liqueurs

**Amarula Cream** – Distell

**Ballycastle Classic Irish Country Cream** – Aldi (c/o Weber Shandwick)

**Carolans Light** – C&C International

**Crème Caramel à la Fleur de Sel** – Pagès Védrenne

**Key Rum Cream** – Stock Spirits Group

**Mozart White Chocolate Cream** – Mozart Distillerie

**Queen Margot Cream Liqueur** – Lidl UK

### Liqueurs – whisky based

**Southern Belle** – Aldi (c/o Weber Shandwick)

### Liqueurs – other spirit based

**Bad Angel** – Babco Europe

**Esprit de June** – EWG Spirits & Wine

### Liqueurs – herbal

**Amaro Averna** – Fratelli Averna

**Oude Meester Ginger Liqueur** – Distell

**Mentendorff Kummel** – Mentendorff & Co

**Studer Original Swiss Bitter** – Studer & Co

### Specialities – anis/absinthe

**Isolabella Sambuca** – First Drinks Brands

**La Fée NV** – La Fée

**Sambuca 100% Anice Stellato** – Fratelli Averna

**Studer Original Swiss Absinth** – Studer & Co

### Other liqueurs & specialities

**Ceylon Arrack** – Marblehead Brand Development

**Mickey Finn Apple** – Babco Europe

**Namida Wasabi Spirit** – Wasabi Spirits

**Noilly Prat Original Dry Vermouth** – Bacardi Global Brands

**Tatratea 52%** – Karloff Tatra Distillery

# ISC: Tequila

## GOLD

**Reposado**  
**Sierra Tequila Reposado** - Borco-Marken-Import

## SILVER

**Añejo**  
**Herradura Añejo** - Brown-Forman  
**Milagro Select Barrel Reserve Añejo**- William Grant & Sons

**Reposado**  
**Ambhar Añejo** - Santo Spirits  
**Milagro Reposado** - William Grant & Sons  
**Milagro Select Barrel Reserve Reposado** - William Grant & Sons

**Blanco**  
**Milagro Silver** - William Grant & Sons

## BRONZE

**Añejo**  
**Espolon Añejo** - Destiladora San Nicolás

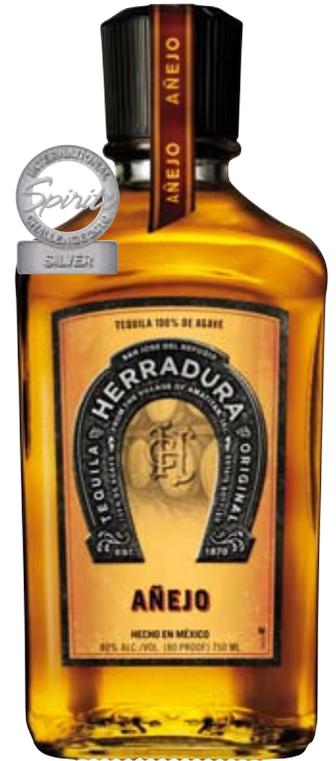
**Reposado**  
**Espolon Reposado** - Destiladora San Nicolás  
**Excellia** - EWG Spirits & Wine

**Blanco**  
**Corzo Silver** - Bacardi  
**Don Alvaro Blanco** - Soho Wine Supply  
**Sierra Milenario Blanco** - Borco-Marken-Import

## COMMENDED

**Reposado**  
**Olmeca Altos Reposado** - Pernod Ricard Mexico  
**Alma Mia Reposado** - Soho Wine Supply

**Blanco**  
**Espolon Blanco** - Destiladora San Nicolás  
**Olmeca Altos Blanco** - Pernod Ricard Mexico  
**Sierra Tequila Silver** - Borco-Marken-Import



# Young at heart

**Jaq Bayles  
delivers  
an update  
on what's  
new in the  
liqueurs  
sector**



**T**he Holy Grail for many producers of liqueurs remains the ability to attract younger consumers and a raft of global marketing ploys this summer is aimed at fulfilling just that quest.

Reformed Spirits, maker of recently launched Triibe – a dairy and lactose-free, clear “cream-style” liqueur – thinks the brand has made a real breakthrough in what it terms a “moribund cream liqueurs sector”.

Jacob Ehrenkrona, chief executive of brand owner Reformed Spirits, points out that no one ever admits to drinking cream liqueurs – although, obviously, given its huge volumes, plenty of people do.

“For quite some time we have been looking at making a product which

would be appealing to a younger audience,” he says.

“We wanted to make it a bit cool and to be something that people would not just drink at home.”

The drink, “blended with charcoal filtered Irish malt whiskey, softened with honey and royal jelly”, was launched last year in Holland, Australia, Germany, Nigeria, America and Puerto Rico, and latterly in the UK.

Ehrenkrona says regional drinking differences have fast become apparent, with 18 to 25-year-olds in the UK drinking it as a long drink with orange juice or as a shot with Red Bull, while in Australia and America it is primarily used by mixologists.

Reformed Spirits creative director David Bromige came up with the idea of

**OUR AMBITION  
IS TO CHANGE  
THE SECTOR  
AS A WHOLE**

**JACOB EHRENKRONA**  
REFORMED SPIRITS CO



a clear cream liqueur that gives the same mouthfeel. “We wanted a cream liqueur with a bit of edge, that was high quality and would appeal to a younger audience but not exclude existing consumers,” says Ehrenkrona.

The major marketing ploy in the UK has been to hold events where everyone can “bring their tribe”. Says Ehrenkrona: “Initially we targeted cities that had a certain element of cocktail culture but a strong student population. I think Triibe will be a core ingredient in cocktails globally. We will continue Triibe events and are increasingly looking at educating barpeople.

“Having been in the industry almost 10 years I look at tequila, rum, gin, vodka and see it’s very hard to bring change. Liqueurs is a huge category and

**(Above) Partygoers enjoy  
Tuaca cocktails**



## The green scene

### Sustainability to the fore

Bartender masterclasses, product launches, packaging revamps – all these are par for the course when it comes to the annual round-up of what's happening in the liqueurs category. But this year, a new trend is emerging. It seems the sector is developing a green conscience.

Topping the social responsibility league must be Distell's cream liqueur, Amarula, which has announced "community upliftment and conservation programmes through the establishment of the Amarula Trust" to celebrate its 21st birthday.

The brand already has a number of other projects under the Trust, including the Amarula Elephant Research Project, which was launched in July 2002 and is aimed at "conserving, protecting and managing African elephants in their natural environment".

The latest project, based in and around the marula-growing region of Phalaborwa, has the slogan "sustaining communities and conscious conservation" and "will endeavour to preserve nature and wildlife, as well as supporting specific communities through the creation of sustainable employment and the cementing of symbiotic relationships with people involved with Amarula Cream".

Global brand spokesman Malcolm Searle says: "The recently launched Amarula Trust is now co-ordinating brand-funded initiatives across several fronts. The marula harvesting season lasts no longer than six weeks and can sometimes be even shorter.

"With some 60,000 people dependent on income derived from marula fruit harvesting, we have sought additional ways to create income, in consultation with community leaders. Residents in the area are being trained in business and building skills.

"Field guide scholarship programmes have also been created to serve aspirant rangers within South Africa and in Botswana, while the work of the Amarula Elephant Research Project, based at the University of KwaZulu-Natal is being applied in several public and private game parks within South Africa. Funds are also made available to support some of the infrastructural needs of Kenya Wildlife Services."

Also nailing its green colours to the mast is Védrenne, which is relaunching its entire range of fruit liqueurs in packaging designed to "decrease the environmental footprint at all stages".

Lighter weight bottles, produced from recycled glass, are said to consume less energy during production and save on fuel during transportation. The company says: "Even the cardboard boxes are now made from recycled materials, and boxes, as well as labels, are printed with non-polluting ink."

Védrenne set up a programme to save energy and raw materials three years ago, while devising a plan to reduce and recycle waste. It also favours Burgundian fruit producers that apply "the principles of integrated farm management".



**(Top) The entire range of Védrenne fruit liqueurs has been relaunched in more environmentally-friendly packaging**

**(Above) Tuaca UK brand ambassador Ron Frith in action**

there's so much you can do with it. And you can capture a new generation that would not be seen dead drinking existing liqueurs. People really want to associate with our brand. We have a Facebook club of around 2,000 members who are very active.

"We have a strong following in the gay community, which is very hard to crack – they can be very cynical but have a lot of disposable income.

"Then there is the Goth community and vampire clubs, and the whole sub-culture in extreme sports."

Ehrenkrona adds: "Our ambition is to change the sector as a whole. What it's lacking is a new generation of drinkers who don't drink cream liqueurs. What is the sector going to do in 10 years' time? Twenty-year olds-don't drink them.

People starting to drink Tribe will move on to other brands such as Amarula and Baileys."

Also aiming at bringing younger drinkers into the category is Tuaca, the Livorno-produced liqueur owned by Brown-Forman.

The drink is already popular with aficionados of board riding, and Ron Frith, Tuaca UK brand ambassador, says a major sampling campaign is kicking off in the UK this summer.

"The big markets for Tuaca are the US, Canada and Australia and we're trying to recreate that in the UK. It's about getting it into bars and in people's hands."

For him, the excitement of many liqueur brands lies in their unique taste.

"If you are not a gin, vodka, rum or whisky you are banded into

the liqueurs category. But you can't recreate the brandy-based, vanilla/citrus taste of Tuaca with any other product. There's something new happening in liqueurs every other week."

He also points to the rebranding which is helping certain products increase their popularity levels, citing Drambuie and Southern Comfort's rebranding success in the States and revealing that the Tuaca bottle is about to undergo similar treatment.

"The bottle has always been mildly confusing as to what the product was about, with consumers assuming Aztec or Mexican tequila connotations. "We have come up with an exciting new look for the bottle which will make it easier to tell what it is," he says. The new bottle is likely to be available from October.

## Flavour spectrum

The liqueurs sector is well known for its innovation in terms of flavours and uptake for the latest in trendy tastes tends to be speedy.

Two years ago Wenneker introduced 11 new flavours to boost its existing fruit liqueurs range to 41. Richard Ridley, export director for the brand, says the popularity of new flavours has been extraordinary. "Lychee was introduced last year and is already in



the top 20, while apple is up in 12th position. Liqueurs are not branded very successfully to the consumer and are still very much

an on-trade product, although we have a good presence in the off-trade in the UK and Russia."

He adds that certain flavours are a "phenomenon" in certain countries, citing Finland's passion for passionfruit and sour grapefruit.

"Bartenders are always looking for something new – there are some very strong cocktails that are made by restaurant groups.

"In Finland the SK restaurant group sells specific cocktails based on passionfruit. It's a lot of

volume because it's the keynote flavour for that group. There are phenomena like that."

And emerging markets are creating new opportunities. Ridley says: "In terms of brands we have gone recently into more of the eastern European countries – Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Baltic states.

"They have a taste for sweet products and cocktails. There's a growing interest from a smaller base and maybe influence from Russia. There's an opening up there towards the west so there's more interest in getting what we have."

Wenneker has also this year launched the Nikolski range of vodka-based liqueurs in Portugal in strawberry, melon and peach flavours.

## Courting the bartender

An emphasis on the bartender is the focus of Venice-based Volare this year, with brand ambassador Marco Canova explaining: "The Volare Liquor export team in the past few years has developed a series of marketing activities around the world, such as bartending training, cocktail presentation, partnership with different bartending schools and supporting some of the major flair competition around Europe."

In recent years Canova has trained bartenders and sales people in Lebanon, Russia, Finland, Spain, Italy and Japan. Says Canova: "Receiving some excellent feedback regarding the activities that the company is offering, the Volare team believe working with professional bartenders and educating customers to drink a good quality and well balanced cocktail is the way forward to keep on growing in the right direction."

The next high-profile event for the brand is the second edition of the Flair Master Competition in Helsinki on July 16.

Bartenders are also a focus of Lucas Bols' marketing campaign for the year, with the company publishing the Galliano Guida to give to its "best bartenders and cocktail specialists".

The company says: "This book – a guide to the world of Galliano – tells the story of the liqueur, the ingredients that go to make it and includes a chapter featuring a selected group of Italian bartenders who have created a range of cocktails using Galliano L'Autentico."

As ever, there is no shortage of activity in the liqueurs category, but is that elusive Holy Grail within its grasp? Time will tell.



Volare is focusing on global visibility with bartenders

The lengthy line-up for this year's Drinks International Cocktail Challenge finals was testament to the quality of recipes submitted by the drinks brands in the qualifying rounds. David Longfield reports from the judges' bench

# Shake, battle & roll

**N**ow in its 17th year, the Drinks International Cocktail Challenge has built a reputation in the industry as being the world's only truly independent cocktail competition, attracting the highest calibre of entries from global brand owners, brand ambassadors and bar professionals.

It's the best possible way for spirits producers to showcase how their brand can perform at the cutting edge of the business – mixed in original recipes by some of the world's top bartending names.

This year for the first time, the Cocktail Challenge was opened out beyond its traditional focus on a single cocktail category, to include new recipes in each of the Aperitif, Long Drink and After Dinner categories.

With the prospect of tasting and assessing 28 cocktails, the judges (pictured right) at the finals – held at May's Distil show in London's Docklands – were faced with a daunting task. Well, someone's got to do it.

As it turned out though, the standard of the entries was so high (quite possibly the best ever) that the panel's palates were kept tantalised and refreshed right through to the 5pm finish.

At this point, discussions ensued to select the three category winners from among the various Gold medalists. While this was not a clear-cut exercise, with so many high-scoring efforts, there was, unusually, a unanimous choice for the overall winner – each judge giving it their top individual score.

The Drinks International Cocktail Challenge Champion will be revealed in the presence of some of the spirits industry's most influential names at the International Spirits Challenge awards dinner at the Marriott Grosvenor Square hotel, London, in November.

Contact [jo.morley@drinksint.com](mailto:jo.morley@drinksint.com) for enquiries.

The Drinks International Cocktail Challenge in association with



**Julian Shaw**  
Director, Gorgeous Group



**Andrea Horsfield**  
Director, The Training School



**David Longfield**  
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**Lucy Britner**  
Drinks International news & web editor



**Neil Lowrey**  
Co-founder, Bar Wizards International



Thanks to Nick Wykes and IPBartenders for providing the equipment

# Cocktail Challenge

## Trophy winners



### Aperitifs

#### Beefeater 24: Lapsang Martinez Mixed by Timothy Stones

##### Ingredients

Lapsang Martinez  
35ml Beefeater 24  
25ml Dubonnet  
5ml Maraschino  
5ml Lapsang Souchong syrup

##### Method

Stir and strain into a cocktail glass.  
Garnish with an orange twist.



### Long Drinks

#### Volare: Gyaos Mixed by Jamie Stephenson

##### Ingredients

25ml Volare Green Melon  
25ml Volare Peach  
25ml Lemon juice  
2 Dash Regans' Bitters  
75ml Monster Ripper

##### Method

Shake all ingredients except Monster Ripper.  
Strain into a tall glass over cubed ice.  
Top with Monster Ripper.  
Garnish with a slice of melon and lemon twist.



### After Dinner

#### Bénédictine: Monk's Sour Mixed by Ludovic Miazga

##### Ingredients

50ml Benedictine  
25ml freshly squeezed lemon juice  
2 bar spoons of organic honey syrup (homemade)  
1 dash of orange bitters  
15ml egg white

##### Method

Add all ingredients in a shaker then ice (egg white last).  
Shake hard.  
Strain into a Monk's wooden cup.  
Garnish with grated nutmeg.



### GOLD

#### Aperitifs - White Spirits

Bols  
Genever:  
**Genever Diva** (Alex Kratena)



### GOLD

#### After Dinner - Liqueurs & Specialities

Gabriel  
Boudier: **The Maximilian Affair** (Danny Smith for Oskar Kinberg)



### SILVER

#### Aperitifs - White Spirits

Beefeater 24: **English Breakfast** (Timothy Stones)



### SILVER

#### Long Drinks - Brown Spirits

Mekhong:  
**Lady Boy** (Matt Ronald)



### BRONZE

#### Aperitifs - Brown Spirits

Buffalo  
Trace: **King Kong** (Jamie Stephenson)





**GOLD**  
**Aperitifs - White Spirits**  
 Siwucha:  
**The Bimber Cocktail**  
 (Charles Vexenat)



**GOLD**  
**Aperitifs - Liqueurs & Specialities**  
 Gabriel  
 Boudier:  
**Sage In Private Peach**  
 (Danny Smith for Oskar Kinberg)



**GOLD**  
**After Dinner - Brown Spirits**  
 Wild Geese:  
**Five Points**  
 (Nick Wykes)



**GOLD**  
**After Dinner - Brown Spirits**  
 Admiral  
 Rodney:  
**The Lucian Solution**  
 (Jack Rackham)



**SILVER**  
**Aperitifs - White Spirits**  
 Zubrowka:  
**French Bison-Tini**  
 (Che Gibson)



**SILVER**  
**Aperitifs - White Spirits**  
 Siwucha:  
**1946**  
 (Charles Vexenat)



**SILVER**  
**Aperitifs - White Spirits**  
 Bacardi:  
**Vicentico**  
 (David Cordoba)



**SILVER**  
**Aperitifs - White Spirits**  
 Herradura  
 Blanco:  
**Puerto Bello**  
 (Thomas Bartram)



**SILVER**  
**Aperitifs - White Spirits**  
 Bacardi:  
**Bajofondo**  
 (David Cordoba)



**SILVER**  
**Aperitifs - White Spirits**  
 Caorunn:  
**Good for the Gander**  
 (Ervin Trykowski)



**SILVER**  
**Aperitifs - Liqueurs & Specialities**  
 Averna:  
**The Liberal**  
 (Karin Engele)



**SILVER**  
**Long Drinks - White Spirits**  
 Finlandia:  
 Finlandia  
**Ginger Snap**  
 (Pekka Pellinen)



**SILVER**  
**Long Drinks - Liqueurs & Specialities**  
 Gabriel  
 Boudier:  
**Boudier's Spring Thyme**  
 (Danny Smith for Oskar Kinberg)



**SILVER**  
**After Dinner - Brown Spirits**  
 Herradura  
 Reposado:  
**Mayanhattan**  
 (Thomas Bartram)



**SILVER**  
**After Dinner - Brown Spirits**  
 Santa Teresa  
 Selecto:  
**Muchas Caracas**  
 (Thomas Bartram)



**SILVER**  
**After Dinner - Liqueurs & Specialities**  
 Frangelico:  
**Frangelico Choc-Chip Martini**  
 (Stefanie Holt)



**BRONZE**  
**Aperitifs - Liqueurs & Specialities**  
 Midori:  
**Shogun Assassin**  
 (Michelle Smith)



**BRONZE**  
**Long Drinks - Brown Spirits**  
 Chivas  
 Regal:  
**Summer Wind** (Phil Huckle)



**BRONZE**  
**Long Drinks - Liqueurs & Specialities**  
 Wodka  
 Zoladkowa  
 Gorzka  
 Traditional:  
**Green Line**  
 (Michelle Smith)



**BRONZE**  
**Long Drinks - Liqueurs & Specialities**  
 Wodka  
 Zoladkowa  
 Gorzka  
 Mint:  
**Red Mint**  
 (Michelle Smith)

Cachaça producers are pulling out all the stops to create an understanding of their product beyond the Caipirinha, finds **Lucy Britner**

# Party people

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**T**he Caipirinha is where it's at for many cachaça drinkers. So much so that other categories have jumped on the Caipirinha bandwagon with vodka Caipiroskas and rum Caipirissima.

Is it time for campaigners to step in and protect their drink or is there more to cachaça than its signature Brazilian cocktail? "A bit of both" is the answer.

Here we focus mainly on the US because it's cachaça's largest export market by value (\$2.77m) and second in volume to Germany. Unlike Germany, exports to the US grew from 1.2m litres in 2008 to 1.39m litres in 2009. In Germany, volume dropped from 3.7m litres in 2008 to 2.57m in 2009, according to the Brazilian Institute of Cachaça. Paraguay, Bolivia and Portugal lie in third, fourth and fifth positions and volume has increased in all three countries between 2008 and 2009.

So how is growth being achieved? Bossa cachaça's head of business development, Cosme Gomes, says telling people about a new product category and how to enjoy it is a long-term project that is dependent on producers, marketers and independent customer interaction via social networking.

When talking about serves, he says the brand has been educating people on how to mix the product in different ways.

"Aside from the delicious Caipirinhas that are perfect representatives of Brazil's tropical lifestyle, we continue to educate people about how easy and fun it is to mix Bossa in other unexpected ways."

Different ways include the Tudo Livre – Bossa and cola – and Bossa 'n' Tonic.

#### Greater scope

Pitú cachaça's US distributor Winebow's director of spirits, Scott Tallon, says the category is still all about the Caipirinha but there's scope for more.

**MASTER MIXOLOGISTS ARE PUSHING THE ENVELOPE AND ARE VERY CREATIVE**

SCOTT TALLON  
WINEBOW

He adds: "Where would tequila be without the Margarita? The master mixologists are pushing the envelope and are very creative. Take a look at the Pitú Punch created by Sam Clifton in New York city (see box, p33).

"Our last trip to Brazil we stopped in a few local restaurants. The locals order a short cup of hot fish soup and chase it with super-chilled Pitú cachaça. They let the bottle freeze in an ice block and pour at the table."

Punch has also been on the agenda for Leblon cachaça and Erick Castro, from the Rickhouse in San Francisco, came up with a Leblon recipe for the Manhattan Cocktail Classic – a New York festival to celebrate the history and contemporary cocktail culture.

Although Leblon founder Steve Luttmann is keen to see cachaça used in new ways, he is to launch a Save the Caipirinha campaign in the US.

He says: "The purpose

▶ p33

of the campaign is to educate people about the differences in cachaça and, specifically, the difference between an industrial mass-produced cachaça and an alambique craft batch cachaça, the ultimate result being a better Caipirinha.

“The campaign started as an initiative to ‘save the Caipirinha’ from such posers as vodka (ie Caipiroskas). Now it focuses on how to save Brazil’s national cocktail in general by drinking Caipirinhas made with fine alambique cachaças.”

All this campaigning must make people thirsty because, according to Luttmann, Leblon has grown 35% so far in 2010, after growing 25% in 2009. He says: “We are now the market leader in the US and globally we expect our business to achieve more than 35,000 9-litre cases this year.”

Luttmann is no stranger to an eye-catching campaign, having launched the “legalise caçhaca” campaign in 2009.

He says: “The campaign continues to be an excellent device to clearly differentiate cachaça from rum, and to get attention. And, most importantly, it has the attention of the US government’s Alcohol & Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau (TTB), which has drafted a resolution to recognise cachaça as “cachaça” and unique only to Brazil, eliminating the words “Brazilian rum” from the labelling.”

## Campaigning

A call to the TTB yields this response from director of public & media affairs Art Resnick: “A Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding the status of cachaça was drafted and is in the review process. I cannot comment further on it until it is published and do not know when that will be.”

Pitú’s Tallon respects Leblon’s efforts and adds that the ball was rolling before Leblon existed.

He says: “Regarding “legalise cachaça” there are many more people who did the heavy lifting before Leblon was even conceived as a brand. The family owner of Pitú, Maria das Vitoria Cavalcante, is the sitting president of the Cachaça Producers Council



Pitú Punch marks a cocktail change for cachaça, which is normally associated with the ubiquitous Caipirinha

in Brazil. She has been most instrumental with pushing for the same branding that tequila enjoys in Mexico or cognac enjoys in France.

“I remember the first go around with the TTB (formerly the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives) only resulted in higher taxes as it categorised cachaça as rum instead of a speciality spirit and taxed it accordingly.

“Now in the US cachaça is lumped in with all the imported rum, meaning the only way to monitor the category volume is by the export numbers as product is taxed leaving Brazil.”

But Bossa’s Gomes isn’t convinced that removing ‘Brazilian rum’ from bottles in the US is such a good idea.

He says that if cachaça becomes a new category in the US, based on a defined formulation and/or processes that are outside that of other rums, any producer from any country in the world would likely be allowed by the US government to import this new “US-approved cachaça” to the US market, as long as those US guidelines were followed in its production.

He adds: “The Brazilian producers will have no power to stop them. In fact, this will be the Brazilian producers’ worst nightmare because, once defined in that way, cachaça may not be protected as Brazilian any longer.

“On the other hand, ‘Brazilian rum’ is already,

in *prima facie*, ‘Brazilian’ and can only be made in Brazil. So, the current use in America of ‘Brazilian rum’ is already protective of our product’s true origin, but Brazilians probably won’t be able to have it both ways.

“So, if this name change based on technical definition is attained, it may open a dangerous Pandora’s box for Brazilian producers whose initial aim was exactly the opposite.”

Gomes continues: “Moreover, by defining ‘cachaça’ as ‘not being a rum’, as some supporters of this project clearly propose, Brazilian cachaça brands may then be legally barred from the enormous and most lucrative rum market in the world, the US – one that is worth remaining a part of and also going after.”

## Future definition

Gomes’s suggestion for the best future definition of cachaça for Brazilian producers reads thus: “If they cannot or are not willing to completely cancel this project within the US government, their best bet is to focus on petitioning the US government to create a sub-category of rum, called Brazilian rum, under which you’ll find cachaça.”

DI



**Spain's wine producers are finding salvation in export markets as US and UK consumers embrace the country's culture. Patricia Langton reports**

# Against the odds

Photo: Shutterstock/Joan Ramon Mendo Escoda

**S**panish wine producers are increasingly dependent on export sales to balance the books as the country's economic crisis drags painfully on into the second half of 2010.

As consumers have tightened their belts and stayed at home, the traditionally strong on-trade has been a visible casualty, losing sales to the off-trade leading Victor Fuentes, general manager at Barón de Ley, to comment: "The Spanish market is becoming more European."

Thankfully, export prospects are looking up and notably so in the UK and the US although pricing continues to be a major factor.

### Multiple challenges in the UK

Trading conditions have also been far from favourable in the UK due to an unsavoury mix of economic malaise, unfavourable exchange rates, taxes on alcohol and the widespread deep

discounting (three bottles for £10) practices adopted by supermarkets in particular in a bid to encourage spending.

Added to this there has been turmoil in wine retailing and the industry has yet to recover from the demise of First Quench (the name behind Threshers and Wine Rack stores, many of which have ceased trading since 2009).

However, with at least two retailers – Asda and Sainsbury's – notching up prices on three-for-two deals, importers specialising in Spanish wines, including Free Run Wines, are feeling more optimistic.

Free Run Wines now offers a wide portfolio from the Félix Solis Avantis wine group, covering price points from £3.99 to £19.99. The wines range from its traditional base of Valdepeñas to the higher premium wines of the Pagos del Rey group of wineries developed since 2002 (Ribera del Duero, Toro, Rueda and now Rioja).

### THE SPANISH MARKET IS BECOMING MORE EUROPEAN

VICTOR FUENTES  
BARÓN  
DE LEY

Managing director Charles Elms says the prospect of an end to deep discounting is "encouraging for everyone". Armed with a portfolio of "modern and good-value-for-money Spanish wines" he's confident Free Run will be able to take advantage of some interesting opportunities, led by a Rioja offering recently reinforced by three reserva labels.

Elms says: "Rioja is still the 'must have' – especially in high street multiples and the independents, but the on-trade is good for Rueda as well as our [Viña Albali] reservas and gran reservas from Valdepeñas."

The return to strength of the high street retailer would also be welcomed in the UK. As things stand, Oddbins largely has the field to itself and, under the management of Simon Baile, its range has significantly improved. Its Spanish selection offers plenty of choice, with wines from lesser-known

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## Spanish Wine

regions such as Costers del Segre, Bierzo, Priorat and Toro, as well as ever-popular Rioja wines.

### US opportunities

Prospects for Spanish producers are also looking brighter in the US, thanks to steady economic recovery, though much depends on a more favourable and stable euro/dollar exchange rate.

Rioja producer CVNE is particularly bullish about the US. Export director José Luis Riga says: "The US is one of the top five markets for us, yet with the potential to become the number one in the medium term."

Until now, CVNE has focused on its higher premium wines, including Imperial, Viña Real and Contino and, if the exchange rate is unfavourable, this makes it (and others focusing on the upper end) a player in the now more challenging \$20-plus arena.

In order to exploit the opportunities Riga sees in the market, the "freshest and most competitive wines" from the portfolio are heading stateside: Cune white, rosé, crianza and reserva (\$10.99-\$23.99).

Furthermore, as he explains, the producer is going through "major changes" in its distribution setup. "CVNE has taken a stake in Europevin, a well-established importer, and this will allow us to implement a balanced on-trade/off-trade strategy in the most efficient way," he says.

With all this in place Riga is confident of good progress across the CVNE portfolio, though much depends on the exchange rate. "Hopefully the current exchange rate [the euro stood at around 1.25 to the dollar at early June] will remain stable for the rest of the year and reservas will be back below \$20. Ours [Rioja category] is in steady but firm growth, as opposed to major booms followed by major declines seen in other regions," he says. "Continuous market work and investment is key."

The view regarding the US market at Grupo Faustino is also upbeat – not just for Rioja but for other Spanish regions too.

Like Félix Solís Avantis, Grupo

Faustino has branched out from its traditional base, Rioja in this case, to offer wines from a variety of regions, including La Mancha, Navarra and Ribera del Duero (see box).

Export manager Antonio Pinilla says: "Rioja is the first of the three most reputed 'Rs' – together with Ribera del Duero and Rías Baixas – but nowadays other regions are also successful in the US. Spain is offering extraordinary quality, well-presented labels and very attractive prices."

How has the first half of 2010 been for Grupo Faustino? "We have seen double-digit growth. It is also true that last year numbers were really difficult – but what is important for us is that our gran reserva and reserva business is recovering, not only in the off-trade but also in the on-trade, which means the US consumer is getting out and starting to buy higher premium wines again."

Pinilla, like Riga, is watching the exchange rate keenly and he underlines the importance of other factors to ensure Spain's progress and competitive strength. "More than ever Spain must overdeliver in terms of quality and maintain the unique personality of her wines," he says.

At Marqués de Caceres marketing manager Anne Vallejo reports improved sales, especially for its reserva and crianza wines in the US market. However, the producer's strategy for this market, its leading export market, is not to chase volume. Vallejo says: "Our main objective is to maintain our market share and brand image without having to recur to the aggressive pricing policies being implemented in certain states such as Florida. Our brand policy is based on offering high quality at sustainable prices."

Finally, as Pinilla points out, there's good general awareness among US consumers of Spain's achievements across gastronomy, culture and sport to help things along. Think Penelope Cruz, sportsmen such as Rafael Nadal and Pau Gassol, Bilbao's Guggenheim museum, El Bulli restaurant and its many disciples and the all-round popularity of tapas-style dining. So there are reasons for Spain's wine exporters to be cheerful, after all. **DI**



### Glimpse of the future

Grupo Faustino's new Portia winery in Ribera del Duero opens its doors to the public this autumn, complete with visitor attractions including a restaurant. This latest addition to a series of Spanish wineries featuring spectacular modern architecture is the result of a project headed by the UK's Lord Norman Foster of architects Foster & Partners.

Portia is Foster's first winery project and follows previous well-known works linked to his name, including Wembley Stadium and Beijing Airport. The budget for Portia is reported to be around €35m.

"Grupo Faustino wanted to do something to mark its 150th anniversary in 2011 and Ribera del Duero is both an area where it was not present and one of Spain's rising stars," says export director Antonio Pinilla.

Situated 60 minutes by car from Madrid, the winery was designed in close collaboration with Portia winemaker Raul Quemada and features three interconnecting sections for fermentation, ageing and bottling. It serves Grupo Faustino's 990ha of vineyards, which were acquired during the 1980s and are within a radius of 15km.

Three wines are now offered: Portia 2006 (£12.99), Portia Prima 2007 (£15.99) and the more youthful Elbeia Roble 2009 (£8.99), the first wine made at the winery and aged for just a few months in American oak.

Quemada's aim is to offer full-bodied Tinta del País (Tempranillo) wines from Portia in line with the Ribera del Duero wine style, however he seeks more elegance, fruit and aromas and French oak will increasingly be used over American to achieve this. The current wines, complemented by an elegant label design, are an impressive debut.

### Bodegas Valdemar launches Tempranillo Blanco

Bodegas Valdemar is one of the first producers to launch a wine made exclusively from Tempranillo Blanco – a lesser-known local grape variety and one of the six traditional and non-traditional white varieties which joined the line-up of permitted Rioja grapes in 2007.

Inspiración Valdemar Tempranillo Blanco makes its debut with the 2009 vintage and follows a number of years of experimentation to get the best from this "new" variety by winemaker Gonzalo Ortiz. It joins another recent original offering from the producer: Inspiración Valdemar Maturana Tinta red.

Tempranillo Blanco, which has a very similar DNA to its red namesake, offers a structured wine style – this wine is enhanced by fermentation and short ageing in new French oak and its citric and tropical fruits make it a completely different proposition to other Rioja whites typically made from Viura.



## Closures

**After huge amounts of research and enormous investment in wine-stopper development, the long-standing arguments are all but over. Christian Davis seeks closure in the debate**

# Stop gap

**B**asically a stopper is to keep the wine in and oxygen out. You do not want to spoil or taint the wine but that is it. Increasingly, it is not important what it is made of as long as it functions technically. The market decides what it wants.

These are the words of Dean Banister, commercial director of Diam Closures. “We have come a long way over the past 10 years. There used to be evangelistic views but the emotion has gone out of it.”

Those quotes indicate what a long way the wine industry and its suppliers have come over the past decade or so. The issue of TCA (2,4,6-Trichloranisole, the reaction between chlorine and organic phenols with mould and moisture to form the TCA compound, which produces the musty smell and taste associated with “corked” wine) has all but been kicked into the long grass. The major cork producers, particularly Portuguese company Amorim, the largest cork processor in the world, have spent millions on research and investment in procedures. They would claim to have all but eradicated TCA from their corks.

There is not the room in this feature to explore the scientific issues – the latest to exercise minds is OTR (oxygen transmission rates, the ingress of oxygen past or through closures which influences ageing and can lead to oxidation) and philosophical debates. For those wishing to go deeper, *Drinks International* commends DI contributor Jamie Goode, who has a PhD in plant biology. He wrote the respected *Wine Science* book and his website, wineanorak.com, and his article on closures on the Wines & Vines website are good places to start.

A recent article in *Vineyard & Winery Management*, a leading North American technical publication, commented that hardly anyone was talking about cork and tainted wines any more.

Robert Parker and Jancis Robinson MW, arguably the world’s most influential wine writers, have both commented on the fact that they taste fewer corked wines these days.

The article’s conclusions are:

- after years of expressing disappointment with cork stoppers, leading wine writers are changing their tune
- cork taint is showing up in fewer



tastings and wine competitions

- the wine media no longer views cork taint as a big story
- cork will continue to co-exist with screwcap and synthetic closures.

At a recent series of wine tastings in London, *Drinks International* asked various wine buyers about company policy (if any) towards closures and their own opinions.

Asda, the UK’s second largest multiple retailer, is owned by the US retailing giant, Walmart. Wine selection

**FSC accredited cork is the closure of choice for the Co-op in the UK and it has approved Amorim’s new Acquamark corks which, the company says, are recyclable, biodegradable and are said to have been processed to give superior sealing capacity**



manager Philippa Carr MW says: “We do not dictate to suppliers. It is a case of whatever is appropriate to the wine. Screwcap has been a challenge, particularly as regards getting the sulphur management right. Nevertheless, I’m a real fan of screwcap.

“It is a case of whatever is right for the wine. Some producers do not have (access to) a bottling line or a particular region does not have a screwcap bottling line, so if they wish to use synthetic or cork, we are not going to force people. I have nothing against cork but we are not in the business of wines for long-term ageing and that is the strength of cork. Customers want clean, sound, fault-free wines, day in, day out,” Carr says.

Justin Howard-Sneyd MW is global wine director of Direct Wines, which is one of the world’s largest mail-order wine suppliers. He worked formely for Safeway (in the UK) and UK retailers Sainsbury’s and Waitrose. Direct has a £340m turnover and its global operations constitute: 75% Europe (predominantly UK, Germany and Switzerland), 20% US and 5% Australasia.

He tells DI: “Until recently we took the view that, as our customers were older than the average and therefore likely to be more traditional, we preferred cork-based closures. We have recently relaxed the view that customers did not want to see screwcap. We now think they would



be happy with an alternative, especially with white, rosé and fruity red wines.

“There are the double-disk closures such as Amorim’s Twin Top and we are approving the Diam stopper,” says Howard-Sneyd. “We do not do a lot with plastic. As far as screwcap is concerned I feel there are no issues over sulphur regime or oxygen management. That is all well understood now.”

Paul Bastard, wine development manager for the Co-op multiple retailer and convenience store operator in the UK, is not a fan of synthetic closures.

“I’m not too keen on synthetic – you can’t pull it out, you can’t put it back in. Screwcap is becoming more and more prevalent but there is still room for best

quality cork and Diam,” he says.

Vicky Wood, the Co-op beer, wines and spirits category marketing manager, gives chapter and verse: “The Co-operative aims to match the closure with the individual wine.

“Where the opportunities arise, we are actively seeking to replace synthetics with natural closures, and we would like to move as many of our own-brand wines as possible to FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)-accredited cork. To this end, we have approved Aquamark closures from Amorim. Earlier this year, we moved a selection of our own-brand wine range to FSC-accredited cork, following months of collaboration with supplier Kingsland Wines & Spirits. ▶ p41

**WE HAVE  
RELAXED THE  
VIEW THAT  
CUSTOMERS  
DID NOT  
WANT TO SEE  
SCREWCAP**

JUSTIN  
HOWARD-  
SNEYD  
DIRECT  
WINES



“We also like the technical capabilities of Diam closures. We have sought SO<sub>2</sub> (sulphur) levels that are lower than ‘normal’ for many years, and work with the wineries to match the redox potential of the wine with the level of SO<sub>2</sub> used to minimise oxidative/reductive effects later on. A big challenge remains in minimising oxygen pick-up at bottling.”

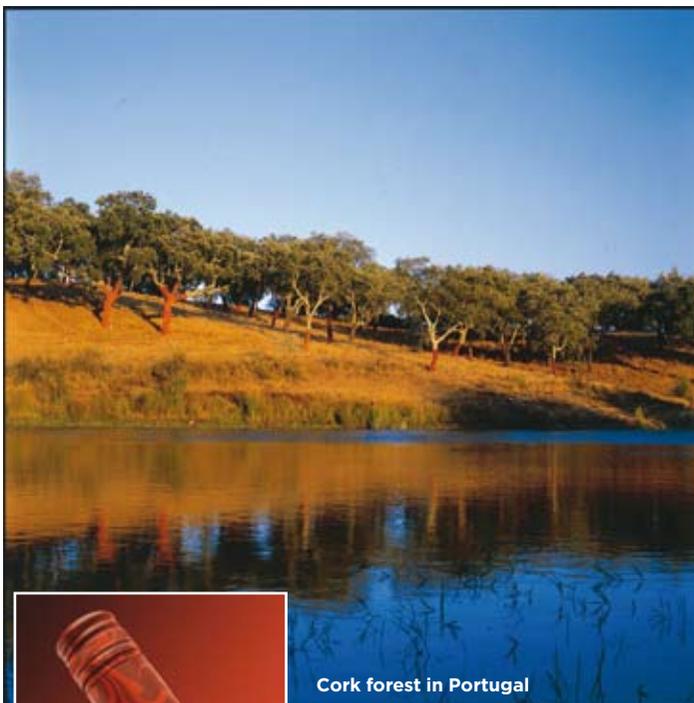
Neil Towns, head of buying at P&O Ferries, which runs ferries from the UK to France, Spain and Ireland, says: “As far as traditional glass bottles go, our customers are comfortable with either these days. With their tastes and favourites being well established prior to travelling with us, they are rarely surprised by a screwcap or a cork.”

“In my opinion the debate is increasingly one that concerns the industry rather than the customer, particularly at the more popular end of the market,” adds Towns. “Our customers want good quality, fresh wine and providing they get it they are all handy enough with a corkscrew or dextrous enough for the screwcap.”

Finally, a view from Tesco, one of the world’s largest retailers. Category technical manager Andy Gale tells *Drinks International*: “Our closure strategy is designed to maximise shelf-life of the product, reduce any incidence of taint or flavour scalping and present our wines at their optimum for customers.”

He says the key elements of this strategy are:

- adoption of screwcap where possible and relevant
- move to high-grade natural cork for fine wines and for those markets that legislate against alternative closures
- move away from injection-moulded



Cork forest in Portugal



(Above) Stelvin closure  
Below: Vicky Wood



synthetic corks to high-performance co-extruded synthetic and technical corks

- commitment to investigate and trial novel closure technologies
- aspire to use only most sustainable closures.

Gale concludes: “Broadly, most suppliers are sympathetic to our requirements, with the exception of those markets where legislation does not permit alternative closures.”

### The suppliers

And so on to the makers. Amorim has been at the forefront of the battle to subjugate TCA. As well as its Twin Top (two discs of quality natural cork top and bottom with granulated cork in between) closure, it has introduced the competitively priced Neutrocork, similar to Diam, and Acquamark.

Last January Amorim’s Luxury Unit unveiled the Top Series for spirits bottles. Gordon & MacPhail chose it for its Mortlach 70 Year Old, which is claimed to be the world’s oldest scotch with a price tag of £10,000.

Amorim marketing and communications director Carlos de Jesus

### Closures – global share

<b>18.3 million</b> closures	
Cork	<b>70%</b>
Screwcap	<b>16%</b>
Synthetic	<b>14%</b>

Source: industry estimates



says that, while synthetic is seen as the cheapest stopper, Amorim’s new cork variants can undercut alternatives “by as much as 50%”. De Jesus also reveals that a new, improved Twin Top is due out later this year.

Apart from the improved quality and performance of cork, De Jesus makes the point that, with premium packaging so important in consumer choice, cork ticks boxes when it comes to a more upmarket image and it boasts environmentally friendly credentials with cork forests being managed sustainably and the cork factories recycling everything from heat and water to the cork dust.

While many seem to be signing the letter of condolences to synthetic closures, Nomacorc, which claims to be the largest maker of alternative closures, says it completed a record quarter with all-time high volumes in the first quarter and its growth is double digit worldwide.

The company’s chief executive, Lars von Kantzow, says: “Winemakers continue to embrace our closures because they deliver consistent oxygen transfer rates and ensure optimal wine maturation in the bottle.”

DI

## Security and anti-counterfeiting

A huge issue for many international brand owners and producers of super and ultra-premium variants is counterfeiting. As well as the health of the brand, there is also the health of the consumer to consider. A bad spirit can blind or kill someone.

Guala, a 50-year-old company specialising in plastic injection that started by making parts for table football, is one of the leading manufacturers of “security” stoppers.

Essentially the company makes and assembles stoppers that make refilling all but impossible. One of its stoppers comprises 15 parts. So, along with invisible inks and tags, the idea of the security closure is for it to be so secure that the only way you can get it off is by breaking the neck of the bottle.

When you have a brand such as Diageo’s Johnnie Walker Blue Label King George V, which retails for approximately £450, it is vital for all concerned that the consumer is drinking the real thing.



**W**ith an increasing reputation for innovation, Australia's McGuigan Wines has developed a new style of Semillon, intended to capture a slice of the ever-growing market in New World Sauvignon Blanc.

The company's 18 winemakers were challenged with this task, each having one tank to fill with a wine made to the brief: "How do we make a white wine that is going to pull people away from Sauvignon Blanc?"

At 11.5% abv, the chosen wine – a 2010 vintage bottling – is relatively low in alcohol compared with the mainstream, although relatively high for Australian Semillon.

It's grassy, smoky and lemony on the nose with baked pear and apple, and is explosive on the palate with lemon curd and zingy acidity backed by a pithy richness. "It will lose its floral character relatively quickly but retain its steel, and will develop those secondary [honeyed, buttery] characters more quickly," says Neil McGuigan, general manager at

brand owner Australian Vintage.

Grapes were sourced from outside Semillon's traditional Hunter Valley stronghold, in the less highly priced areas of mid-New South Wales and Sunraysia.

Semillon can make many different styles of wine, largely depending on how ripe the grapes are at harvest. It "ticks a lot of boxes", according to McGuigan: it matures at a lower alcohol level; can be made at any price point; is a "classic" variety; doesn't need oak (due to its inherent richness); has longevity in the bottle; has the "halo effect" of already being known for quality, albeit with wines in a traditionally more "challenging", rich and steely style.

"The message we've got to get to the consumer is, this is new from Australia," says McGuigan. "It's fruity, it's exciting."

With the name intended to subtly direct the consumer's mind towards Australia's main rival in the zesty dry white market, New Zealand Sauvignon

Blanc, The Semillon Blanc will feature the words "New wine style" on the label, along with reference words such as "zinginess" and "fresh" in the back label description.

The Semillon Blanc will be available initially on a six-month exclusive at Tesco in the UK from July, priced at £6.99 with promotions down to £4.99. "They have taken the initiative and we want to give them the first shot at it," says McGuigan. The company has produced a first run of 300,000 litres and, says McGuigan will "see how it goes" before deciding whether to make it available in other markets, including Australia.

It takes a lot to impress Dan Jago, Tesco category director for beers, wines and spirits. But at the product's launch at the London International Wine Fair in May, Jago said: "This is potentially the most exciting thing I've seen from Australia in a very long time. It's got the flavours, it's got the style, and it's from a producer who people are beginning to recognise."

## English/Welsh wines celebrated

The results of the English & Welsh Wine of the Year Competition are in. A record number of medals were awarded across the style categories by a judging panel of five Masters of Wine, chaired by Susan McCraith MW.

According to the organisers, results showed the quality of the 2009 vintage, particularly in the dry white and still rosé categories. Sparkling wines were consistently impressive.

The category that stood out most for the judges was the still rosé section, where six gold medals were awarded (none were gained in the 2009 competition).

The trophy for this category – the Waitrose Rosé Trophy – was won by Camel Valley Fortnum & Mason Rosé 2009.

The Gore-Browne Trophy for Wine of the Year was awarded for the second year in a row to Ridgeview Wine Estate, this year for their Grosvenor Blanc de Blancs 2001, bottled in magnums. For the full results, see [englishwineproducers.com/results](http://englishwineproducers.com/results)

## SIAL food exhibition tempts wine professionals

**T**he organisers of SIAL claim that wine is gaining a firm footing in the exhibition.

The trade show, which takes place between October 17 and 21 at the Parc des Expositions in Paris Nord Villepinte, is claimed to be the "largest meeting place in the world for the food profession" – manufacturing, mass retail catering and food service". It says more than 200 exhibitors show wines and almost half have global interests.

With 40% of visitors classified as "international", research conducted by SIAL after the 2008 show shows more than 16,000 visitors were interested in the wine sector with 73% saying they consider attending the show because of its wine element. The organisers say exhibitors told them many buyers they meet are responsible for specifying a raft of products, not just food-related.

In an effort to tempt more wine professionals, SIAL says it is also laying on an innovation forum, a meeting place for wine professionals and a Best Buy 2010 Selection highlighting good value-for-money wines.



## International Beer Challenge

### GOLD

#### Birra Toccalmatto (Italy)

Sibilla

Surfing Hop

#### Birrificio Del Ducato (Italy)

Black Jack Verdi Imperial Stout

Sally Brown "Baraggo"

#### Boston Beer Company (US)

Samuel Adams Stony Brook Red

Samuel Adams Utopias 2009

Samuel Adams Imperial Pilsner

Samuel Adams Noble Pilsner

#### Doppio Malto Brewing Co (Italy)

Mahogany IPA

#### Fyne Ales (Scotland)

Highlander

Vital Spark

#### Grand Ridge Brewing (Australia)

Natural Blonde

#### Harvey & Son (England)

Prince of Denmark

#### Harviestoun Brewery (Scotland)

Ola Dubh 30

Old Engine Oil

#### Redoak Brewery (Australia)

Redoak IPA

Redoak Baltic Porter

#### Salopian Brewing Company (England)

Darwin's Origin

#### St Austell Brewery (England)

Smugglers Vintage Ale

Proper Job

#### Thornbridge Brewery (England)

Kipling

Bracia

#### Valscura Brewery (Italy)

Passionale

#### Weihenstephan (Germany)

Weihenstephan Hefewiess

# Top of the hops

## Brewers globally are busy perfecting styles and creating new techniques, as the latest IBC shows

**T**he International Beer Challenge is now in its 14th year and entries have come from 16 countries, including Russia, Peru, Namibia and Scotland.

Judges were selected from across the industry – from brewers to beer writers and retailers. Chairman for the eighth year running Jeff Evans said: "The beers submitted exemplify just how exciting the world of beer is today – how brewers are not just perfecting beer styles that have been around for centuries but also how they are expanding the horizons of beer lovers by creating new styles and experimenting with new techniques and ingredients.

"There has never been a better time to drink bottled beer."

Judges blind-tasted hundreds of beers before

skimming the cream for the super jury to taste and reward. Judging took place at famous London beer pub the White Horse in Parsons Green.

The Super Jury included Jeff Evans, Nick Dolan, Glenn Payne, Melissa Cole, Evelyne Canteranne, Alex Barlow. The main jury included Jeff Evans, Kelly Ryan, Andreas Falt, Stephano Cossi, Glynn Davis, Simon Lewis, Ron Pattinson, Steve Williams, Mark Dredge, Adrian Tierney-Jones, Helen Windle, Ed Bains, Tom Cadden, Nigel Tarn, Carl Kins, Mark Johnson, Martin Howe, Adam Fenton, Tom Fryer, Ben Lockwood, Phil Lowry, Jasper Smith, Des De Moor, Joanne Miller, Glenn Payne, Matteo Milan, Alan Dunn, Paul Buttrick, Pete Brown, Tim Hampson, Lucy Britner, Richard Dinwoodie, Zeph King and Duff Wallace.





## SILVER

### Arran Brewery (Scotland)

Arran Blonde

### Baltika Breweries (Russia)

Baltika No 8 Wheat

### Birra Del Borgo (Italy)

Re Ale Extra

Keto Reporter

### Birrificio Del Ducato (Italy)

Winterlude

Verdi Imperial Stout

### Birrificio Turbacci (Italy)

Turbacci Black

### Boston Beer Company (US)

Samuel Adams Scotch Ale

Samuel Adams Black Lager

Samuel Adams Latitude 48

Samuel Adams Cream Stout

Samuel Adams Imperial Stout

Samuel Adams New World Triple

### Freedom Brewery (England)

Freedom Pilsner

Freedom Organic Lager

### Fuller Smith & Turner (England)

ESB

### Fyne Ales (Scotland)

Avalanche

### Grand Ridge Brewing (Australia)

Supershine

Hatlifter Stout

Moonshine

### Harvey & Son (England)

Bill the Brewer

Imperial Extra Double Stout

### Harviestoun Brewery (Scotland)

Schiehallion

### Hawkshead Brewery (England)

Red

### Holgate Brewery (Australia)

Mount Macedon Ale

### Holgate Brewery (Australia)

Hopinator

### Hook Norton Brewery (England)

Twelve Days

### Kelburn Brewery (Scotland)

Cart Blanche

### La Birra Di Meni (Italy)

Durgnes

### Mitchell Kraus Brewing (England)

Mitchell Kraus American Pale Ale No2

### Moor Beer (England)

Old Freddy Walker

### Nail Brewing Australia

Nail Stout

Imperial Clout Stout

### Purity Brewing (England)

Pure UBU

### Purple Moose Brewery (Wales)

Dark side of the Moose

### Redoak Brewery (Australia)

Redoak Blackberry Wheat Beer

### RJ King Walker Brewing Co (US)

Wing Walker Pale Ale

### Sharps Brewery (England)

Massive Ale

Special

### St Arnou (Australia)

St Arnou Premium Blonde

### St Austell Brewery (England)

M&S Cornish IPA

Clouded Yellow

### St Peters Brewery (England)

Ruby Red

### Thornbridge Brewery (England)

Jaipur

Halcyon

### Williams Brothers Brewery (Scotland)

Kelpie

Ebulum

Midnight Sun

# International Beer Challenge

## BRONZE

### Adnams (England)

Adnams Innovation  
Adnams The Bitter

### Arran Brewery (Scotland)

Red Squirrel

### Baltika Breweries (Russia)

Baltika No 4 Original  
Baltika No 6 Porter

### Batemans Brewery (England)

Dark Lord  
Triple XB

### Birra Del Borgo (Italy)

Re Ale

### Birra Toccalmatto (Italy)

Fumè du Sanglier

### Birrifficio Del Ducato (Italy)

Chimera

### Birrifficio Turbacci (Italy)

Turbacci Quinn  
Turbacci Strong Ale

### Birrifficio B3 (Italy)

Levante

### Bitter End Brewing (England)

Lakeland Honey  
Lakeland IPA

### Black Sheep Brewery (England)

Riggwelter

### Blue Tongue Brewery (Australia)

Blue Tongue Premium Light  
Blue Tongue Pilsner

### Boston Beer Company (US)

Samuel Adams Honey Porter  
Samuel Adams Holiday Porter  
Samuel Adams Irish Red  
Samuel Adams Old Ben Old Ale  
Samuel Adams Mile High Barleywine  
Samuel Adams Octoberfest  
Sam Light

### Brass Historique de l'Abbaye du

Cateau (France) Vivat triple

### Brasserie Des Sources (France)

Vieux-Lille Blonde

### Cairngorm Brewery (Scotland)

M&S Scottish Ale

### Carlow Brewing Co (Ireland)

M&S Irish Stout

### Carlsberg India

Tuborg Strong

### CCM Distillery (Mexico)

Bohemia

### Clausthaler (Germany)

Clausthaler

### Cosmos Brewery (Thailand)

Chang Export

### Crouch Vale Brewery (England)

M&S Essex Summer Ale

### Dark Star Brewing (England)

Imperial

### Doppio Malto Brewing Co (Italy)

Zingiber

### Frederic Robinson (England)

M&S Cheshire Chocolate Porter  
Chocolate TOM  
Unicorn Premium

### Fuller Smith & Turner (England)

1845  
London Pride

### G Menebrea e Figli (Italy)

Menabrea 1846

### Grand Ridge Brewing (Australia)

Gippsland Gold

### Harvey & Son (England)

Old Ale

Christmas Ale

### Harviestoun Brewery (Scotland)

Bitter & Twisted

### Hawkshead Brewery (England)

Lakeland Gold

### Hawthorn Brewing Co (Australia)

Amber Ale

### Hook Norton Brewery (England)

Hooky Gold

Haymaker

Old Hooky

### Jennings Brewery (England)

Snecklifter

### Joseph Holt (England)

Maple Moon

Six Ex

### La Birra Di Meni (Italy)

Pirinat

### Mitchell Kraus Brewing (England)

Mitchell Kraus Czech Pilsener No1

### Moor Beer (England)

Peat Porter

Fusion

JJJ IPA

### Namibia Breweries (Namibia)

Windhoek

### Outback Brewery (Australia)

Outback Brewery Chili Beer

### Perla Browary Lubelskie (Poland)

Perla

### Redoak Brewery (Australia)

Redoak Miyuki

### Ridgeway Brewing (England)

Reindeer Droppings

Querqus

Ridgeway Imperial Red

Ridgeway Triple Barley

Ridgeway Foreign Export Stout

### Roscoe's Hop House (US)

Roscoe's Hop House Pale Ale

### Sharps Brewery (England)

Honey Spice Triple

St Enodoc Double

### Shepherd Neame (England)

Asda Extra Special Whitechapel Porter

### St Austell Brewery (England)

Admirals Ale

Tribute

G-Free



### Stewart Brewing (Scotland)

St Giles

### Thornbridge Brewery (England)

St Petersburg

Jaipur (Bottle Conditioned)

### UCP Backus Y Johnston (Peru)

Malta Cusquena

Cusquena Premium

### Whittingtons Brewery (England)

Winters Tail

### Woodfordes Brewery (England)

M&S Norfolk Bitter

# Design to the fore

**I**t's important to recognise that a beer's packaging can have a massive influence on a consumer's purchasing decision. Does it stand out on the shelf? Is the label well designed? What does it say about the liquid inside? What shape is the bottle and how does this enhance the consumer experience?

So during the 2009 IBC, *Drinks International* separated the design and packaging element from the tasting competition. We then recruited a panel of beer, marketing and design experts to help reward design and packaging excellence.

## Judging panel

The judges were: Pete Brown, beer writer; Tim Croxson, operations director, glass & packaging supplier Croxsons; Sean McEvoy, sales manager Olympus Labels; Paul Foulkes-Arellano, managing director, Wren & Rowe design agency; Jeff Pickthall, specialist beer bar/microbar founder; Jeff Rosenmeier, Lovibonds brewery founder; and Samantha Briney, advertisement manager, *Off-Licence News*.



## GOLD

### ESTABLISHED

Birra di Meni Pirinat  
Birrificio Italiano Cassissona  
Birrificio Italiano Tipopils  
Cusquena Premium  
Nardons  
Sam Adams Triple Bock

### NEW

Moor (range)  
Septem Fridays and Mondays (both)

## SILVER

### REPACKAGED

St Austell HSD  
St Austell Tribute  
Thornbridge Jaipur

### NEW

Bitter End Lakeland IPA

## BRONZE

### ESTABLISHED

Birificio Turbacci - Turbacci Black  
Birrificio Cittavecchia - Karnera  
Hook Norton 12 Days  
Hook Norton Double Stout  
Hook Norton Haymaker  
Hook Norton Hooky Bitter  
Hook Norton Old Hooky  
Purity Pure UBU  
St Austell Smugglers  
WEST St Mungo

### REPACKAGED

Jennings Cumberland Ale  
Williams Brothers Kelpie  
World Brews Rialto

### NEW

Hogs Back Gardeners Tipple  
Hogs Back TEA  
Mitchell Krause (range)



## Cider

Much as it has been a phenomenon in the UK, cider still struggles to find its place on the world stage. **Nigel Huddleston** reports on the latest brand activity worldwide

# Growing the niche

**C**ider has become the drink of the moment among a significant sector of younger drinkers in the UK – but the prospects for its advancement in the rest of the world continue to look patchy.

It took a consumer-driven, over-ice serve to bring life back to what was a flagging market in the UK, still the world's biggest cider market by far.

What became known as the “Magners phenomenon” – taking the name of the anglicised version of the Irish Bulmers brand owned by C&C International – quickly spawned a host of imitators.

It also opened the door to niche products targeted at different consumer groups: perry reinvented as “pear cider” for the young adult market; rosé ciders

for the female market; and luxury, boutique brands with one eye on links with the culinary world.

Figures from the UK-based Nielsen research organisation put 2009 growth at 7% and the market at just under £2 billion.

That represents a slowing down on recent years, but still impressive given the economic downturn and set against a 3% fall in beer sales.

South Africa saw 11% growth in cider sales between 2008 and 2009 and reports from Australia also suggest double-digit growth, but elsewhere the picture is mixed, with the traditional, artisanal cider markets of France and Spain both down.

Euromonitor International puts global growth at around 4%, but for cider “global” is a term that needs some qualification.

### The big picture

The cider market is dominated by northern Europe and the English-speaking world, while the emerging markets of the Far East and the BRIC nations hardly make the remotest edges of most international cider suppliers' radars.

The UK claims more than a third of global sales and, according to the British National Association of Cider Makers, 59% of EU cider sales are in the UK.

“It's very difficult to take a global view, because it's such a diverse market,” says Davin Nugent, managing director of Cider of Sweden, which manages the Kopparberg cider brand in the UK, Ireland, Spain and the US.

### Share of EU Cider volumes (%)

1 UK	59.2
2 Ireland	11.6
3 France	7.9
4 Spain	6.1
5 Germany	4.6
6 Finland	4.6
7 Sweden	4.0
8 Belgium	2.6
9 Lithuania	0.4
10 Denmark	0.3

Source: UK National Association of Cider Makers

### South Africa

Trends tend to be micro rather than macro in nature. South Africa is one of the fastest-growing markets of any scale and is dominated by winemaker Distell's Hunter's and Savanna brands – the former trading in Magners-style over-ice territory, the latter



## Cider



Another exporter looking to make a play in the growing Australian market is New Zealand's Ballydooly, which entered into a joint venture with Western Australia's Gage Road Brewing to make premium cider for the Australian market two years ago.

### New Zealand

New Zealand itself has seen a fledgling premium bottled cider category emerging, led by Crushed Apple from Monteith's, owned by Asia Pacific Breweries, in which Heineken has a stake.

Monteith's brewery manager, Tony Mercer, says it was trying to "raise the bar" on cider, which has been growing at 13% in the country.

"It has had an image problem caused in part by low-rent PET bottles and low-quality raw materials where concentrate has been used.

"Kiwis are keen on natural products that have a great taste, not products made from concentrates."

Migration between New Zealand and the UK is also a feature of the growth in New Zealand, he added. "There is a reverse flow of New Zealanders returning from their overseas emigrations and bringing with them the tastes they have developed."

### US/Canada

In the US, the market is growing for boutique "hard cider" – as opposed to the notion of cider as a soft, non-alcoholic drink – led by the likes of Woodchuck and a clutch of brands that are side projects for bigger craft brewers, such as Boston Beer's Hardcore.

There's also a sizeable presence for Heineken's Strongbow, driven by ex-pat Brits and sales in English or Irish bars in cities such as New York and Chicago.

The complexities of state distribution in the US are a big turn-off for many overseas brands that lack scale, though the UK's Aspell claims to have coverage of 90% of the country.

"Although there is good potential, we don't expect the cider market to catch on at the same rate as it has done in Australia," admits Chevallier Guild.

Nugent at Kopparberg adds: "There are recognisably mainstream brands on the west coasts of Canada and the US but the market is really about pockets of appreciation and understanding among aficionados."

Vincor Canada's Growers is the biggest brand in Canada, claiming **p50**



aping the vitality of south American beer by shoving a wedge of lemon in the bottle for an on-premise serve.

South African market growth has encouraged Heineken to launch its British Strongbow brand – the world's best-selling cider brand with around 15% of world sales – into the market.

"It was the first major launch for a cider in a number of years," says Heineken's international cider marketing manager Steven Greaves. "It was the scale of the market and its dynamism that appealed and we'd been doing very well with Heineken in that market so it made a lot of sense."

### Australia

Strongbow already had a longer-term presence in Australia through a licensing deal with the Foster's Group, which has also launched Viper, an RTD cider-based mix with vodka or gin, and the upmarket Mercury Artisan brand.

But it's in ciders from smaller, craft producers where a lot of the interest lies

in Australia, among them the British boutique cider producer Aspell, as part of a reciprocal distribution agreement with Australia's Little World Beverages, whose Pipsqueak cider Aspell sells in the UK.

"Little World has the same philosophy as Aspell, focusing on heritage, authenticity and premium products for the top end of the market," says Henry Chevallier Guild, Aspell partner and exports director. He adds that Aspell is doing "phenomenally well" three years after its Australian launch.

"The Australian drinking culture is similar to that of the UK, with a genuine demand for premium quality," says Chevallier Guild. "The weather in Australia also helps. While we're seeing an ironing-out of the traditional summer sales-peak in the UK, sunny days will always have a positive impact on sales.

"We also believe the significant number of Australians living in the UK is influencing the cider market in Australia. When Australians return home many search out the cider they enjoyed in the UK."

The Australian market is also being driven by ex-pat Brits visiting and living in Australia, says Nugent at Kopparberg. "There's huge demand but it's all ex-pats," he insists.



# Cider

47% of the market, though virtually all of its 1 million cases sold annually are in the western provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Growers' focus is on cider flavours, with White Cranberry bringing its portfolio up to 16 when it was launched last year.

Canada has also started to export a handful of sweet ice ciders to the US and UK markets, made in a similar way to its ice wines with cold harvest and fermentation of the apples for a rich, dessert wine-style flavour, but it's an ultra-niche market with bottles selling for upwards of £25 in the UK on-premise market.

Woodchuck is the hard cider market leader in the US and, although Strongbow claims around 14% of the market, Greaves says: "We're really only scratching the surface."

"Coming in as an outsider you've got to have deep pockets to crack the US," says Nugent at Cider of Sweden. "We've just launched in 400 bars in Manhattan and are rolling out into off-premise, but it's almost a bar-by-bar approach, trying to introduce American consumers to the idea of what a cider is. Hard cider is really associated with alcopops in many people eyes."

Nugent says Kopparberg is steering away from ex-pat English and Irish bars. "We're trying to get into more upmarket, edgier bars and take a different approach. It's an expensive and slow way to do things but hopefully it will give us the long-term presence in the market."

One US cider producer looking to break into export is Minneapolis-based Crispin Cider, which recently

took over the Fox Barrel cider company of California.

Chief executive Joe Heron claims: "Crispin is now well-placed in terms of scale and a diversified super-premium portfolio to compete at the highest levels within the global cider market."

The deal brings together Fox Barrels' hard ciders, made from west coast apple juice with a Crispin line-up that includes its artisanal cloudy ciders Honey Crisp and The Saint, both of which champion the over-ice serve.

## Global niche

Consolidation could strengthen the hand in the global drinks market of an industry that is largely populated by smaller players, but for cider to make a major breakthrough on the world stage it's bigger deals that are really going to cut the ice.

Though this year's acquisition by C&C international of the UK's Gaymer cider company was big news in Ireland and the UK, it hasn't done much to upset the status quo on the world drinks stage.

If a global picture of the cider market is to emerge then Heineken seems certain to play a central part in it.

It's got the world's biggest brand in Strongbow, is the number one player in the world's biggest cider market, and has some sort of presence in all the major markets of any size.

If anyone is going to crack one of the BRIC countries, then Heineken seems to fit the bill, though other global brewers arguably have more say in those markets.

"If you look at South America, it would really need A-B Inbev or SAB Miller to come in and do something and they really haven't got the background in cider," says

Nugent. "There would need to be a huge change in public awareness and understanding – and to what end would they want to do that when it would just take away from their beer business?"

Greaves at Heineken adds: "Companies such as ours are always looking for opportunities and have projects going in each of the major markets. There's certainly massive potential for cider. It's just a question of which beer makers have the facilities and the knowledge to break those markets."

It might be left to a handful of plucky smaller producers to try to take them on for now.



## A question of style

The UK and most other English-speaking markets have been experiencing something of a cider boom, but in mainland Europe and Ireland times have been tougher.

The global downturn brought reversals in Ireland, Spain, Finland and France – all markets where local and regional styles dominate.

In Ireland, C&C's Bulmers has a virtual monopoly and, although Sweden's Kopparberg claims to have stolen 5% of the market, "new brands don't have the same momentum as in the UK," says Nugent.

Spain and France are virtually NPD-free zones too. Greaves at Heineken says: "Spain is all about local product and British ex-pats, whereas in France it's more of a family celebration drink with locally-made products in Brittany and Normandy."

Heineken is looking to open up a cider market in its native Netherlands after launching Strongbow there last year.

Nordic countries are noted for their sweeter style of cider, and more traditional ciders have found it hard going there, says Nugent.

"Magners and Bulmers struggle to get shelf space," says Nugent. "They're trying to do what they do in the UK but consumers in Scandinavia are used to a much sweeter taste profile and it doesn't seem to transfer to those markets as much as the Swedish or Finnish style works elsewhere."

Greaves at Heineken, which has Finland's number two brand in Upcider, agrees.

"It's a sweet style of cider – more like an RTD market – and if cider is going to expand globally then that's probably not the way to go.

"RTDs grew very rapidly and declined very rapidly within the space of about 15 years. If you want a quick buck you can do that, but it won't create a sustainable category."



"We are making tentative steps into Russia where there seems to be a strong interest in the brand," says Chevallier Guild at Aspell. "We are in ongoing dialogues with a number of other countries following several enquiries, although it is unlikely any of these markets will ever be as big as that of the UK."

It's that essential fact that seems certain to keep cider as a niche product, focused on a handful of its traditionally strong markets; at least in the short-term. **DI**

Snow Patrol with Paolo Nutini (back) and emerging Irish stars Heathers

Andres Poveda CPR

## ARTHUR'S DAY

Diageo has announced the return of its Arthur's Day celebrations for stout brand Guinness, with celebrations to take place on September 23 in Ireland, Europe, Asia, Africa, North America and the Caribbean.

Arthur's Day celebrates Arthur Guinness and benefits the Arthur Guinness Fund, which supports entrepreneurs aiming to make changes in communities around the world.

The worldwide toast will begin in Ireland on September 23 with live music performances taking place simultaneously in the Guinness Brewery at St James's Gate and in pubs and venues throughout Dublin, Cork and Galway. Acts include Snow Patrol, Jay Sean and Paolo Nutini.

## RUBBISH HOTEL GETS SUPERMODEL'S VOTE



Corona Extra beer opened a pop-up beach hotel made of rubbish last week.

The Save the Beach Hotel, in the centre of the city, was built using litter collected from European beaches and it was designed by German artist HA Schult.

Supermodel Helena Christensen was the first guest. HA Schult said: "The exterior and interior will be unattractive, will have no water, neither electricity nor comfort; it will reflect the way things might end up if we do not take care of our planet."



## BRITNER'S BLOG

DI's Lucy Britner shares her world

I recently went on a cocktail DaVinci Code-style trip to the Bénédictine Palais in Fécamp, France.

Bacardi is celebrating 500 years since an Italian monk called Dom Bernardo Vincelli came up with the recipe for Bénédictine. Vincelli came from an Italian monastery founded by St Benedict of Nursia, who created the Bénédictine order. Hence the name of the liqueur, or elixir as it was known. Like lots of herbal drinks, Bénédictine was believed to have medicinal qualities and though we know there are 27 herbs and spices in the mix, only three people know the secret recipe.

So anyway, the Bénédictine Palais is a fascinating celebration of the liqueur and its revival in 1863 by a Fécamp-based wine trader who stumbled upon an old, almost illegible book that contained the recipe for Bénédictine.

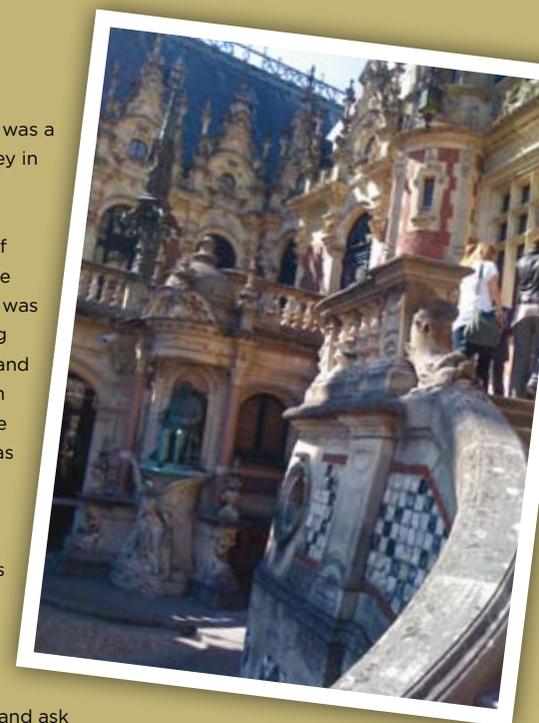
The wine trader - Alexandre Le Grand - stuffed the Palais full of his collectables, including locks and keys, old musical instruments and a pair of giant boots (you'll have to go to the Palais to find out more about those).

These aren't, however, the most curious artefacts. On a wall upstairs, there's a picture of a large, toothless gentleman called the 'Béné King' - this leads to another twist in the legacy of

Bénédictine... The Béné King was a Bénédictine-lover from Burnley in Lancashire, England.

The Burnley Miners' Club is the single largest consumer of Bénédictine in the UK because the East Lancashire regiment was stationed near Fécamp during WW1 and drank Bénédictine and hot water in the trenches with French soldiers. They took the drink back to the UK and it has remained popular ever since.

So dedicated was 'Béné King' Harry Eccleston to the liqueur that, when he died, his son wrote a poem and sent it to the Palais along with his father's photograph. So the last line's all yours Béné junior: "Just go to the Miners and ask for a Béné and hot."





## OWN A PIECE OF ISLAY

Find it hard to meet fellow peaty whisky chums? Want to “own” a square foot of land on Islay?

Well, you're not alone – 400,000 people are now members of Friends of Laphroaig and they can be found in 161 countries around the world.

Friends are given a square foot of land on Islay and are invited to the distillery

to collect their “rent” – a dram of Laphroaig.

The group also has access to special Laphroaig C  rdeas editions – “c  rdeas” means friends in Gaelic. Friends also occasionally get to go to nice dinners and drink Laphroaig cocktails, like the one here, invented by Brian Silva at Rules restaurant in London. What’s not to like?

### SLIGHTLY TOO COMFORTABLE FRIEND

- 35ml Laphroaig 10 Year Old
- 15ml Southern Comfort 50%
- 15ml Martini Extra Dry

Method: Add all the ingredients to a mixing glass. Squeeze in three or four drops of fresh orange. Add ice and stir to mellow and balance. Strain into a large, iced old-fashioned glass. Garnish with a lemon peel.

**Four New York bartenders crossed the pond to show the Brits what they do with U'Luvka vodka.**

**Aicha Sharpe, John Lermayer, Jackson Cannon and Dushan Zaric each created two cocktails, one**

**signature and one for the brand, at London's Lonsdale Bar.**

**Highlights included Zaric's Mediterra Cocktail – a sweet and bitter mix of U'Luvka Vodka, honey syrup and Boiron fig pur  e.**

**And Sharpe's Funking Grape Cocktail – a mix of U'Luvka Vodka, red seedless grapes, slightly oaked Chardonnay, and simple syrup.**



## A TASTE OF PARADISE

Heaven Hill Distilleries has launched the 21st flavour of its Burnett's flavoured vodka brand.

The new flavour – pineapple – joins blueberry, cherry, citrus, coconut, cranberry, espresso, fruit punch, grape, lime, mango, orange, peach, pink lemonade, pomegranate, raspberry, sour apple, strawberry, sweet tea, vanilla and watermelon.

All Burnett's vodkas are quadruple distilled and triple filtered.



Reid Hafer, senior brand manager, said: “With the addition of pineapple to the flavoured

vodka line we are able to expand the brand portfolio without cannibalising existing flavours.”

The new product will be available throughout the US in 1.75-litre, 1-litre, 75cl, and 50cl sizes, bottled at 35% alcohol by volume (70 proof).

The suggested retail price is \$9.99 for 75cl.

## GET READY TO RUM-BLE

Appleton Estate has launched the Appleton Estate Jamaica rum International Bartender Challenge & Showcase to select the top bartenders from 10 of the brand's key markets.

The winner of each challenge will have the chance to travel to Jamaica in October to represent their country at the showcase in Kingston.

Markets selected to participate in this programme are Jamaica, Australia, Canada, Cayman, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Spain, the UK and the US.

The showcase in Jamaica will see each bartender man their own station, where they will make Appleton Estate Jamaica Rum cocktails made with Jamaican fruits and other specialities they will have selected on trips to local markets and grocery stores on the days preceding the event.



## MIXING IT UP FOR LICOR 43

Spanish liqueur Licor 43 is on the hunt for a UK brand ambassador. Mixologists from across the UK are being invited to prove their skill, style and flair in a bid to represent the global brand in the UK throughout 2010/2011.

There's also a prize – a trip to three Mediterranean party cities. Regional heats involve mixologists making two Licor 43-based seasonal cocktails, plus an original take on the Vanilla Daiquiri. The winners of the regional heats will be flown to Barcelona, Valencia and Ibiza Town. Drawing inspiration from the Mediterranean, the finalists will then go head to head in a mix-off to impress the judging panel.

The regional heats are in Brighton's Mekaba on July 6, Barrio Central, London on July 12 and Raconteur, Edinburgh, on July 19.

The final will take place in September in London following the trip to Spain.

The winner will be awarded  4,000 to conduct 12 days of in-bar education, training and judging, attend a photo-shoot for the brand, and regularly contribute to the liqueur's blog.



# Ballantine ambassador wins US Open golf tournament

Graeme McDowell, the Northern Ireland golfer who won June's US Open golf tournament, is a global ambassador for Ballantine's, the world's number two scotch whisky.

Having held off the likes of Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and Ernie Els, McDowell was said to be celebrating with a bottle of rare Ballantine's Championship Blend, which he co-created with Ballantine's master blender, Sandy Hyslop.

McDowell said: "Ballantine's has always been a lucky charm for me and since my 2008 Ballantine's Championship win in Korea I've played some of the best golf of my life. I said I would open my very special bottle of The Ballantine's

Championship Blend either on the birth of my first child, or my first major win – Pebble Beach came first."

McDowell is the first European in 40 years to win the US Open – held this year at the Pebble Beach course in California. Wearing the Ballantine's logo on his left sleeve, he has represented Ballantine's at many events since winning The Ballantine's Championship title in Korea in 2008.

McDowell won the US Open by one shot from France's Gregory Havret with Ernie Els two behind in third and Phil Mickelson and Tiger Woods tied fourth. He is now almost certain to secure a Ryder Cup place this October.



## TALISKER BOUNTY HOVES TO

The expedition following Captain Bligh's notorious 4,000 mile journey across the Pacific from Tonga on The Bounty 221 years ago, is pictured arriving in Kupang, West Timor.

Four men completed the journey in a 25ft open wooden boat with no navigation charts, two weeks' supply of water, little food and not much else. A GPS tracking system, locked away from the crew, allowed the boat to be tracked.

The expedition was sponsored by Talisker, the Diageo-owned Isle of Skye single malt whisky brand. McIntyre's grandparents emigrated to Australia from Skye shortly after their marriage in 1901.

The crew is hoping to raise \$250,000 for a motor neurone disease charity in the UK.



## The Season app

The Season in England used to be about young debutants from the upper classes seeing and being seen at events such as Wimbledon, Henley Regatta and Glyndebourne opera.

Veuve Clicquot has always produced a handy booklet telling you what is on and where. Now the champagne marque has refreshed and updated the "Season" by turning it into an app for mobile phones and including everything from the iTunes festival to art shows and literary events.



## Smokehead rocks

Smokehead, the seriously powerful single malt whisky, is the official whisky sponsor of *Classic Rock* magazine, VIP sponsor for one of this year's biggest rock events, London's High Voltage Festival (July 24-25), and the Classic Rock Roll of Honour 2010 Awards in November, attended by, and celebrating, rock's greats.

Smokehead's new advertisement will feature heavily in *Classic Rock* and its sister publication, *Prog Rock*, throughout 2010.

The campaign takes its lead from Smokehead's distinctive packaging, cocooning a skull, the time-honoured symbol of rock.

Iain Weir, marketing director for Ian Macleod Distillers, said: "Combining its adventurous and modern packaging with a rich rollercoaster of challenging flavours, Smokehead defies conformity and what people would traditionally expect from an award-winning single malt whisky. Smokehead is powerful, intense and not for the faint-hearted. The perfect match for a *Classic Rock* lover."

Rock on.



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### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

**UK PRICE 1 year** £107.00 **2 year** £214.00 **3 year** £321.00  
**EUROPE PRICE 1 year** €129.00 **2 year** €258.00 **3 year** €384.00  
**ROW PRICE 1 year** \$299.00 **2 year** \$599.00 **3 year** \$899.00

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William Reed  
BUSINESS MEDIA



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