

## International Wine Challenge 2006 - the results

16 May 2006 by JR

In my [Tale of two wine competitions](#) last Saturday, I said I couldn't wait to find out the results. First out of the traps is the International Wine Challenge which has just released the results of its 2006 competition online at [www.internationalwinechallenge.com](http://www.internationalwinechallenge.com) and the following summary of results.

For a pdf of a complete listing of all wines entered by country/ region and what they won click [here](#).

"The 2006 tally of 9,111 entries were tasted by a team of 450 judges under the stewardship of Challenge Chairmen – Charles Metcalfe, Derek Smedley MW, Tim Atkin MW and Sam Harrop MW. Out of the 35 countries submitting entries, 27 countries have won medals with **Cuba, Japan, Romania, Slovenia** and **Uruguay** amongst them.

"**France** has won the most medals by a mile this year (612). Next closest is **Australia** with 490. These two rivals are neck and neck however in terms of Gold medals with 50 a piece. From France, the classic regions performed well with Bordeaux taking 10 Gold medals and Burgundy, a very respectable 8. Australia notched up a brilliant 36 per cent medal success on total entries, an impressive result on a submission of over 1,300 wines. [We are not told how many wines France submitted but it must have been several thousand to get that total number of entries over 9,000. – JR]

"**Portugal** comes third this year with 43 Gold medals, a great achievement from a smaller wine- producing country. Unsurprisingly, the great fortified wines, port and Madeira, dominate the Golds, but there are 15 top medals for table wines as well. Most of these are from the Douro (both red and white), with welcome additions from Dão and the Alentejo.

"**Austria** has performed extremely well, scooping 85 awards in 2006 compared with 55 last year. The country clocked up 17 Gold medals, representing 9 per cent of total entries, and they are by no means all sweet wines. A staggering 45 per cent of Austrian entries were awarded medals making it more consistently successful than any other country.

"**New Zealand** also returned its usual successful figures, with 40 per cent medals on 365 entries, 14 of which were Gold medals; 11 of these were from Marlborough, with Riesling, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir striking Gold as well as Sauvignon Blanc.

"**Chile** continues to show its wonderful value for money with Golds for Equality, a Fairtrade Cabernet Sauvignon, and the Casillero del Diablo Merlot.

"There will be plenty of opportunities for UK shoppers to sample the flavours of Gold, with many very well- distributed wine brands winning the most sort [I think they mean sought – JR] - after medal, including: Gallo, Peter Lehmann, Jacob's Creek, Concha y Toro, Etchart, Wolf Blass, Yering Station, Villa Maria, Torres, La Gitana and Blason de Bourgogne. [What – no Yellow Tail? JR]

"Sainsbury's and Marks & Spencer in particular come up trumps. Of all the supermarkets, Sainsbury's wins the greatest number of Gold medals (5, plus 4 Silver & 7 Bronze) however whilst M&S comes 2<sup>nd</sup> in terms of the number of Gold medals (4), they carry away a further 19 Silver medals and 20 Bronze medals. Tesco wins 2 Gold medals, 6 Silver and 18 Bronze.

"The incredible value of the supermarket wines cannot be overlooked either. Three of Sainsbury's 5 Gold medals will retail at less than £10: **Taste the Difference Douro 2004** (£7), **Leasingham Magnus Riesling 2004** (£7.50) [the [2005](#) is even better – JR] and **Taste the Difference Pouilly Fumé** (£9).

"Plenty of more esoteric, single domaine wines won awards, as well as "museum wines" such as **Charles Heidsieck, Blanc des Millenaires 1983** and **Taylor's Vintage Port 1985**. Sake was judged for the first time this year; **Otokoyama Kuniyoshi 2006** picking up a Gold.

"For the complete list of medal winners, see [www.internationalwinechallenge.com](http://www.internationalwinechallenge.com). It can be sorted by both country and producer."