

## Desert Island drinks

28 Apr 2011 by Jancis Robinson

*Desert Island Discs* is an institution in the UK, a hugely popular BBC Radio 4 programme in which people of note are asked to choose eight recordings, a book and a luxury to take with them to a notional deserted island. On the way, the presenter, currently Kirsty Young, extracts their life stories from them.

The BBC has recently made the programme's archive available online [here](#) and, for the next week or so, is asking all visitors to the Desert Island Discs archive to make their own choice of eight recordings so that they can form a picture of which are the most popular. Go [here](#) to register your favourites.

A total of 228 of the 2852 people whose choices are given online chose something drink-related as their desert island luxury. Many of them - musicians in particular - chose to maintain their coffee intake, but most of those interviewed in recent years seem to have chosen wine in some form.

This varies upwards from jockey Frankie Dettori's 'lifetime's supply of Pinot Grigio' to artist Maggi Hambling's ambitious and well-informed 'wine cellar from All Souls College, Oxford'. My choice in 1996 was the non specific but practical 'a cellar of wine and a corkscrew'.

Katharine Whitehorn outdid me on practicality, however, with her 'machine to distil whatever is there'.

Oz Clarke (1999) chose his memory, while Hugh Johnson (1984) sneaked in 'writing materials and lots of bottles'.

Incidentally, I think that the ideal desert island wine would be madeira - not just because of its oceanic connections but because an open bottle would last for months, its acidity would refresh on a hot island and its alcohol would warm you on a cold one.