

# Drinks International



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# Departure zone

**The Vintners' Club** Tuscany

## Vineyard heaven

Castello di Casole is a new five-star resort on a 4,200 acre estate in Tuscany close to Florence and Sienna.

It boasts extensive vineyards and olive groves and there is a Vintners' Club where, for the cost of €25,000 and an annual fee of €1,000, the 24 founding members get the benefits of owning a vineyard without the niggling costs and problems.

The 13 plots spread over 100 acres comprise a mix of Sangiovese, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. The operation is headed by famous Italian producer Piero Incisa della Rocchetta, his family best known for iconic Italian wine, Sassicaia.

Among other benefits the members will receive two cases of the premier members' private label wine, four bottles of the estate's extra virgin olive oil and the opportunity to buy more at special members' prices.

The resort comprises traditional farmhouse villas with modern amenities and there are pools, a fitness centre and wellness spa.

The old castello (castle) itself, which sits on a hilltop commanding views over Tuscany, is being restored as a boutique hotel with 41 suites, fine dining restaurant and spa. It is scheduled to open in spring 2010.

For more information: [castellodicasole.com](http://castellodicasole.com)



## BOOK SHELF



### ● **Tatler Restaurant Guide 2009**

Tatler magazine's 2009 Restaurant guide – mainly for London but also the rest of the UK – is sponsored by Louis Roederer Champagne. The 122-page guide editor, Jeremy Wayne, says the book contains details of more than 300 restaurants with 52 newcomers.

He says: "Recession doesn't have to mean depression. The city (of London) might be burning but the UK restaurant scene is sizzling."

**Published by Tatler magazine.**

**Contact [info@pikepr.co.uk](mailto:info@pikepr.co.uk).**



## Things to do airside



### Website for whisky lovers

● The Balvenie, William Grant & Sons' single malt, has created a website for whisky enthusiasts with what it claims is a "world's first" – the facility to create an online "whisky shelf", replicating the consumer's home whisky collection with tasting notes. Go to: [thebalvenie.com](http://thebalvenie.com)

## Wine on TV

The wine trade has come under the spotlight in a three-part TV series that has been running on BBC 4.

The first episode of Wine featured the famous London wine merchant, Berry Bros & Rudd, with Simon Berry, Bordeaux buyer Simon Staples and Berry's Burgundy buyer, Jasper Morris.

Episode two showed Greek supermarket tycoon Corinne Mentzelopoulos – her family has owned Château Margaux for 30 years – and Margaux's well known director Paul Pontallier.

The final episode went to South Africa and featured producers Oupa Rangaka and Mark Solms (a retired professor who did not drink wine six years ago), with a neuroscientist and Freudian analyst. It charts their attempts to convince buyers from UK retailer Marks & Spencer and the judges at the International Wine Challenge, that their wines are good enough.

**Burgundy producer David Clark with Berrys' Burgundy buyer, Jasper Morris MW**

