

Singapore Airlines: best cellar in the clouds

Buying their First Class passengers' wine 10 years ahead has paid off for Singapore Airlines as it scoops best overall wine cellar at the Business Traveller awards



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Krug Grange Cuvée

“Would you like to order an aperitif to be served after take-off? And can I get you anything to drink with your dinner?”

That would be a yes please, and a yes please from me, and if you are travelling with Singapore Airlines then settle back even more comfortably into your seat because the airline has just picked up first prize for Best Overall Wine Cellar at the Business Traveller Cellars in the Sky Awards.

First Class travellers flying between London and Singapore can expect to be offered a choice of Dom Perignon 2006 or Krug Grande Cuvée, then perhaps a glass of Kevin Judd's Greywacke sauvignon blanc followed by a sip of Château Cos d'Estournel 2004 or Clonakilla shiraz.

While in business class on the same route, the wine list includes Taittinger Brut Millésime 2007, Domaine Laroche Chablis and Taylor's Ten Year Old Tawny Port.

The airline gets through over two million bottles every year and takes a serious interest in Bordeaux, buying wines four years in advance to serve to economy passengers, and 10 years ahead for First Class, in order to secure stock.

Behind the choice of wines served on board are three world-class palates: much-loved British wine expert Oz Clarke, Asian Master of Wine Jeannie Cho Lee and Australian Michael Hill Smith. This golden panel tastes around 1,000 wines every year specifically for Singapore Airlines, before making a careful selection as to which of the wines merit a coveted place on the list.

As well as picking up the award for best overall wine cellar, Singapore Airlines also scooped six other prizes – two golds, one silver and three bronzes. This included a gold for Best First Class Cellar, while Qatar Airways and Korean Air took the silver and bronze, respectively, in this category.

The award for Best Business Class Cellar went to Eva Air, with Cathay Pacific picking up the silver and Singapore Airlines the bronze.

British Airways took the gold for best First Class white for the Domaine d'Ardhuy Corton Charlemagne 2009, Burgundy, France; while in the Best Overall Cellar category Cathay Pacific walked away with silver and Korean Air and Qantas tied for the bronze.