



A Premium Experience



The three judges on an El Al flight, during the airborne competition

EL AL continues to upgrade and improve not only its aircraft but all the minute details that ensure its passengers a perfect flight experience. EL AL recently received global recognition in two premium class wine competitions: "Cellars in the Sky" and "Wine Tasting in the Sky" – the first professional airborne wine contest in the world

Cellars in the Sky

Placing first in the "Best First Class White Wine" category in the Cellars in the Sky 2007 competition for its Chardonnay 2005 from the Castel Winery, EL AL came out ahead of 23 leading world airlines, including Singapore Airlines, British Airways, Lufthansa, Qantas and the Emirates Airline

The Cellars in the Sky 2007 competition was held in London by Business Traveller magazine in cooperation with the international Wine & Spirits Magazine. At the prize-giving ceremony, the judges stated that "the Israeli wine was a surprise with quality that was conspicuously higher than international wines served in the First Class sections of airlines considered to be leaders in the world."

David Maimon, EL AL Vice President of Service said: "EL AL is the only airline in Israel offering First Class service on its flights to various destinations



Castel Wine



Recanati Wine

around the world. We are proud of our partnership with Israeli companies that demonstrate excellence on an international level. Incorporating the special high quality refined wines of the best of Israel's wineries enhances the flight experience for all EL AL passengers, especially those in First Class."

The winning Chardonnay is from the Castel Winery, one of Israel's first boutique wineries, founded in Ramat Raziell in 1988 by Eli Ben-Zaken and his sons Eitan and Ariel. The winery's name is taken from an adjacent Crusader castle. From its very first vintage, the winery earned praises and today its wines are a great success in Israel and overseas.

Castel wines are a blend of several grape varieties – the work of vintner Eli Ben-Zaken. In the old world tradition, the bottle labels specify the area of the Judean Hills, near Jerusalem, in which the grapes grew, as well as the specific area of the vineyard from which the grapes were taken.

'C' Blanc du Castel Chardonnay is produced according to the tradition of Bourgogne (Burgundy), utilizing high quality grapes that grow in the vineyards planted near the winery. After gentle pressing, the new wine is transferred to French oak casks (50% new and 50% one year old). The wine ferments in the casks and undergoes an aging process for one year with its lees. Its fruity bouquet has a hint of toasted almonds. This is a balanced, rich wine that envelops the palate with tastes of citrus and yellow tropical fruits.

Wine Tasting Competition In The Sky

At 32,000 feet above ground, EL AL held the first ever airborne wine tasting competition in the world, to select the best kosher Israeli wine to serve on its flights

The honorable title went to a 2004 Special Reserve from the Recanati Winery, chosen from among 14 kosher wines from Israeli vineyards. The contest took place during a flight to Madrid, with the participation of three distinguished international judges: Raul Castellani of Argentina, Sergio Carrera Undurraga of Chile and Pascual Herrera Garcia of Spain. EL AL's Vice President of Service, David Maimon, explained that people's sense of taste changes at high altitudes, and therefore the airline decided to let the world's leading wine connoisseurs select the "wine of the month" to be served to Premium Travelers.

The winning wine also took the gold medal at the international Terravino 2007 competition in February, along with three other wines from the Recanati Winery. Noam Jacoby, CEO of the Recanati Winery, said, "These awards fortify the winery's position as the leading winery in the Israeli wine industry. EL AL's Business and First Class passengers will get to drink one of the best wines in Israel, which stands out for its strong tannins and chocolate and black cherry fragrance, with a touch of eucalyptus, mint and clove." □