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## Ultimate Spirits Challenge Sets New Gold Standard for Spirits Competitions on March 1-3, 2010 in New York

### *Chairman's Trophy Winners and Semifinalists Are Announced*

**March 15, 2010 (New York, NY).** Ultimate Beverage Challenge's (UBC) first **Ultimate Spirits Challenge** was held at Astor Center on March 1-3, 2010. The inaugural Ultimate Spirits Challenge proved that integrity, method, and credibility can flourish and be the driving forces in a competitive beverage alcohol environment. More than 520 entries from scores of companies and nations were entered, but only a dozen distillates were awarded the esteemed USC **Chairman's Trophy** as the highest scoring spirits of their category.

Following four stages of competitive judging over the course of three days, Ultimate Spirits Challenge Chairman's Trophy winners were arrived at based on their aggregate score on the 100-point scale. Panels of carefully selected spirits authorities (such as Assistant Judging Chairman Sean Ludford, Dale DeGross, Andy Seymour, Jacques Bezuidenhout), educators (Steve Olson, Doug Frost), buyers (James Conley, Ethan Kelley, Audrey Saunders), and author-journalists (David Wondrich, gaz regan) employed UBC's innovative multi-stage scoring system that determined the best of the best entries.

Said UBC Judging Chairman and Managing Partner F. Paul Pacult, "It's clear that a perfect storm of superbly qualified judges, meticulous and innovative methodology, the state-of-the-art clinical environment of Astor Center, and a gifted operational staff helped usher in a new era of beverage alcohol competitive evaluation. I'm looking forward to 2011 already."

The Chairman Trophy winners and Semifinalists for the 2010 Ultimate Spirits Challenge are:

### **Ultimate Spirits Challenge Chairman's Trophy Winners & Semifinalists 2010**

#### **Vodka & Aquavit**

***Chairman's Trophy Winner: Orzel Vodka (Poland)***

***Semifinalists: Skyy Vodka (USA)***

***Vermont White Vodka (USA)***

***Finlandia Grapefruit Vodka (Finland)***

## **Gin & Genever**

***Chairman's Trophy Winner:*** Broker's London Dry Gin (England)

***Semifinalists:*** Beefeater 24 Gin (England)

Citadelle 2009 Reserve Gin (France)

Tanqueray London Dry Gin (England)

## **Tequila & Mezcal**

***Chairman's Trophy Winner:*** Tres Agaves Anejo Tequila (Mexico)

***Semifinalists:*** Sombra Mezcal, (Mexico)

Don Pilar Anejo Tequila (Mexico)

Del Maguey Tobala Single Village Mezcal (Mexico)

## **Rum & Cachaça**

***Chairman's Trophy Winner:*** Mount Gay Rum 1703 (Barbados)

***Semifinalists:*** Zafra 21 Year Old Rum (Panama)

J. Wray & Nephew Overproof Rum (Jamaica)

Bacardi 8 Years Old Rum (Puerto Rico)

## **Ireland & Wales Whiskey**

***Chairman's Trophy Winner:*** Midleton Very Rare 2008 Blended Irish Whiskey (Ireland)

***Semifinalists:*** Connemara 12 Year Old Peated Single Malt Whiskey (Ireland)

Bushmills 1608 Single Malt Whiskey (Ireland)

Redbreast 12 Years Old Pure Pot Still Whiskey (Ireland)

## **Scotland Whisky**

***Chairman's Trophy Winner:*** The Macallan Fine Oak 21 Year Old Malt Whisky (Scotland)

***Semifinalists:*** Johnnie Walker Gold 18 Year Old Blended Whisky (Scotland)

Royal Salute 21 Year Old Blended Whisky (Scotland)

Glenmorangie Signet Single Malt Whisky (Scotland)

## **US & Canada Whiskey**

***Chairman's Trophy Winner:*** George Dickel No. 12 Tennessee Sour Mash Whiskey (USA)

***Semifinalists:*** Sazerac 18 Year Old Kentucky Straight Rye Whiskey (USA)

Crown Royal XR Blended Canadian Whisky (Canada)

Woodford Reserve Distiller's Select Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey (USA)

## **World Brandy, Grappa & Eau-de-Vie**

*Chairman's Trophy Winner:* Nonino Grappa II Merlot (Italy)

*Semifinalists:* Macchu Pisco (Peru)

Bartlett Spirits of Maine Apple Brandy (USA)

Giovi Clear Brandy of Cactus Pear (Italy)

## **Cognac**

*Chairman's Trophy Winner:* Frapin Chateau Fontpinot XO Grande Champagne Cognac (France)

*Semifinalists:* Landy XO Cognac (France)

Pierre Ferrand Selection des Anges Grande Champagne Cognac (France)

Hennessy XO Cognac (France)

## **Armagnac**

*Chairman's Trophy Winner:* Chateau du Busca-Maniban Hors d'Age Tenareze-Armagnac (France)

*Semifinalists:* Chateau de Laubade 1960 Bas-Armagnac (France)

Marie Duffau Hors d'Age Bas-Armagnac (France)

Cles des Ducs VSOP Armagnac (France)

## **Calvados**

*Chairman's Trophy Winner:* Boulard Grand Solage Pays d'Auge Calvados (France)

*Semifinalists:* Coeur de Lion Hors d'Age Pays d'Auge Calvados (France)

Roger Groult 8 Year Old Pays d'Auge Calvados (France)

## **World Liqueurs, Absinthes & Other**

*Chairman's Trophy Winner:* St Germain Elderflower Liqueur (France)

*Semifinalists:* Herbsaint Original Liqueur d'Anis (France)

Bauchant Orange Liqueur (France)

Mathilde Raspberry Frambroise (France)

For a complete list of all results and scores please go to:

[www.ultimate-beverage.com/USCresults2010/](http://www.ultimate-beverage.com/USCresults2010/)

## ABOUT ULTIMATE BEVERAGE CHALLENGE

Founded by award-winning journalist, author, educator and critic **F. Paul Pacult**, wine and spirits publishing industry veteran **David Talbot**, and *Spirit Journal* managing editor **Sue Woodley**, **Ultimate Beverage Challenge** is now providing both the industry and consumers with a clear and unassailable indication of beverage alcohol quality, in terms that are readily accessible.

- **Ultimate Cocktail Challenge**, in which spirits and wines will be judged on how well they perform in classic cocktails, occurs on **April 12-14, 2010**.
- The inaugural **Ultimate Wine Challenge**, for the evaluation of fine still, sparkling, and fortified wines, will be held on **June 7-11, 2010**.

"Sue, Paul, Sean and I are especially thrilled about the revolutionary **Ultimate Cocktail Challenge** in mid-April," said Managing Partner David Talbot. "UCC is going in the **opposite direction** of how all other cocktail competitions are conducted. We will to evaluate spirits and wines in the context of **how they taste in classic cocktails**. For instance, gins will be tasted in five classic gin cocktails against other entered gin brands. So, one gin might be recognized as the "Best Gin in a Gin & Tonic" while another might garner "Best Gin in a Dry Martini" honors and yet another might win as "Best Gin in an Aviation". This unique methodology will trail-blaze a new era of spirits and cocktail evaluation." UBC's advisors for UCC are master mixologists **Dale DeGroff** and **David Wondrich**.

**Ultimate Wine Challenge**, to be held June 7-11, 2010 is being advised by **Doug Frost, MS, MW** and **Jennifer Simonetti-Bryan MW**. Judges will include pre-eminent wine experts like **Charles Curtis MW, Mary Ewing Mulligan MW, Ed McCarthy** and **Patrick Fegan** and many more.

Said Managing Partner Sue Woodley, "UBC methodology and classifications will likewise be groundbreaking for Ultimate Wine Challenge, accentuating the ever-expanding list of wine regions, nations and terroir influences as well as grape varieties and varietal combinations."

**For more information on all three 2010 UBC competitions**, for help with entry forms, for complete Ultimate Spirits Challenge scores, please go to [www.ultimate-beverage.com](http://www.ultimate-beverage.com) or call 1-347-878-6551.

**For media inquiries**, to receive high resolution images and to request interviews, please contact Manuela Savona, Savona Communications, [manuela@savonacommunications.com](mailto:manuela@savonacommunications.com), 917.969.1275.

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Caption: Assistant Judging Chairman Sean Ludford (far left, back row) and Founder and Judging Chairman Paul Pacult (far right, back row) with the judges of the first ever Ultimate Spirits Challenge. Photo Credit: Michael Gold\The Corporate Image.



Caption: Ultimate Beverage Challenge founders - David Talbot (left), Sue Woodley (middle) and Paul Pacult (right) - at the first ever Ultimate Spirits Challenge. Credit: Michael Gold\The Corporate Image.



Caption: Judges at the first ever Ultimate Spirits Challenge. Photo credit: Michael Gold\The Corporate Image.



Caption: Ultimate Beverage Challenge founder and judging chairman, Paul Pacult, at the first ever Ultimate Spirits Challenge. Photo credit: Michael Gold\The Corporate Image.