

**PRESS RELEASE – June 5<sup>th</sup> 2006**

***English Fizz Fit for the Queen***

An English sparkling wine has been awarded the privilege of toasting Her Majesty the Queen's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday as a part of the 'Great British Menu' quest. RidgeView's Merret Grosvenor has been chosen to accompany the *very* special lunch being held at the Mansion House on June 15 to mark Her Majesty the Queen's 80th birthday. The task of choosing the wine to toast Her Majesty was given to a panel made up of Members of Common Council and three from the wine trade, Charles Metcalfe is a wine writer, Derek Smedley MW a consultant and Keith Garrard, recently retired from Chateau Lascombes. A selection of English Sparkling wines were tasted blind and RidgeView came out on top.

This English sparkler; produced by RidgeView is made entirely from Chardonnay grapes grown in the chalky soils under the South Downs. Winemaker Mike Roberts commented "Our wines are chosen for lots of highlight occasions in peoples lives from celebrations of great wins to weddings and christenings. How absolutely wonderful for it to be served to celebrate Her Majesty's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday."

Fourteen of Britain's top chefs have competed for the honour of producing the menu for this grand occasion and public have been following their progress on the BBC's Great British Menu series. The series has proven to be a showcase for the nationwide search of the best of British cuisine.

Lord Mayor David Brewer, host of the event said, "The city of London is proud to honour Her Majesty on behalf of the nation on this very special occasion. Food brings us all together – and through this event the whole country can take part".

This latest honour to RidgeView follows on from the astonishing achievement last year when they won the world wide trophy for best sparkling wine in the International Wine and Spirit Competition. The company is a family enterprise, currently producing 50,000 bottles a year; specialising in growing only the three classic French Champagne grape varieties. The company have been awarded a grant from DEFRA to cope with current expansion plans aiming to produce over 250,000 bottles pa within the next seven years.

Ridgeview's Merret is truly coming back to the City, where in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Christopher Merret was the first to record the process that today is used to make the world's best sparkling wines.

RidgeView's wines are to be found at Waitrose, Sunday Times Wine Club, The Wine Society, Jereboams and other speciality resellers around the country.

ENDS

**Electronic photos, jpegs and more details are available from:**

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