

Title: ' [Screwcaps blamed for tainting wine](#) '

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Few issues divide wine drinkers more than that of the choice between corks and screwcaps.

Traditionalists love cork, as do environmentalists, because it is natural and has served the wine industry for hundreds of years. It also has a satisfying pop when the bottle is opened.

Screwcaps, on the other hand, are seen as industrial, cheap and lacking the romance of the old "closure" but they have been hailed as the future because there is no danger they will spoil or "taint" the wine, a problem that is said to affect up to one in 10 corked bottles.

However a survey by the world's biggest wine competition has added a new twist to the debate.

The tasters at this year's International Wine Challenge, discovered that while cork taint is on the decline, the problems affecting wines sealed with screwcaps have probably been underestimated.

From a blind tasting of more than 9,000 wines they discovered that 4.4 per cent of the corked wine had been tainted in some way while 2.2 per cent of the screwcapped wine had been damaged.

Faults caused by the latter are mainly a build-up of sulphides which give the wine an eggy or oniony flavour.

Sam Harrop, a wine-maker who co-chaired the tasting, said that the problem with screwcaps appeared to be related to their greater efficiency as a seal and that companies who had been using them for a long time had all but eradicated the problem.

Jonathan Ray, The Daily Telegraph wine correspondent, said: "In my mind screwcaps are brilliant. They have eliminated almost all cork taint but this shows they are not infallible."