



EXPANDING Queensland winery Aussie Vineyards has blown away an international all-star field after being named as one of the major winners at one of the world's most prestigious wine shows. The Craig Gore-backed company's 2004 Limestone Coast Chardonnay beat 3789 wines from 16 countries to be awarded Best of Show in the Wine Packaging and Design class at the 2007 Los Angeles International Wine and Spirits Competition. The same Limestone Coast Chardonnay also earned Aussie Vineyards a bronze medal in the taste tests.

A second Aussie Vineyards wine, its 2003 Barossa Valley Shiraz, also collected a bronze medal when the winners were announced in Los Angeles last Saturday. Aussie Vineyards was the only Queensland winery to claim victory honours at the show.

An excited Mr Gore says the win would expose Au wines to some of America's largest retailers, including supermarket chain Ralph's which sponsored the event. "This just shows that the experts are starting to realise what I've said all along – that our wines are as good as any in the world," says Mr Gore. "It also shows that in the case of our wines, you can judge a book by the cover."

Aussie Vineyards is Queensland's largest wine exporter, having shipped more than 75,432 cases of its Au wine to the Americas since September last year. Its Au wine label produces a Cabernet Sauvignon, Shiraz, Merlot, Verdelho and a Chardonnay. It sources grapes from its vineyards on Mount Tamborine and the Granite Belt as well as from some of Australia's most famous wine regions.