CATHAL MCNAUGHTON/PA

Make mine a red: new research has shown that a chemical in red wine thwarts age-related changes in heart genes

Red wine combats effects of ageing

RED wine is good for the heart and helps to diminish effects of ageing as it mimics the benefits of a diet that restricts calorie intake, says a report published last week.

Scientists had noted how people in France had a much lower incidence of coronary heart disease than those in Britain, despite their similar intake of saturated fats.

Many believe the "French paradox", is due to the Gallic tradition of having a glass or two of wine with a meal and focused on a chemical in red wine called resveratrol.

The latest study indicated that even in low doses this chemical mimicked the anti-ageing effects of caloric restriction – a diet with a full range of nutrients but up to 30 per cent fewer calories than usual.

The researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, whose findings are published in *Plos One*, the journal from the Public Library of Science, compared gene changes in mice on a restricted diet with those fed small doses of resveratrol. The doses thwarted age-

related change in heart genes in 92 per cent of the sample, compared with 90 per cent of those on calorie-restricted diets. The researchers concluded that a glass of wine or supplements with even small doses of resveratrol were likely to represent "a robust intervention in the retardation of cardiac ageing".

Resveratrol, which is found in the skin of red grapes, is also present in pomegranates, blueberries, bilberries, cranberries and peanuts. It is only one of

many "healthy chemicals" called polyphenols in wine.
● Drinking five or more alcoholic drinks a week can halve the risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis, says a new study published in the journal *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*.

Researchers at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm believe that alcohol could protect against the condition by reducing inflammation within the body, in a similar way to how red wine helps protect the heart.