Decanter World Wine Awards 2018 – Results Press Release – France

France retains position as most awarded country in the world's largest wine competition as results are announced for the 2018 Decanter World Wine Awards

The 2018 results of the Decanter World Wine Awards (DWWA), the world's largest wine competition, have been released, underlining the continuing increase in diversity offered to consumers, with more than 60 countries submitting wines.

The 15th edition of the Decanter World Wine Awards received nearly 17,000 entries, with a marked increase in wines coming from emerging markets in Central Europe such as Bulgaria, Moldova and Serbia, as well as Central Asian countries such as Armenia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

Over the course of an intense week at London's CentrEd at ExCeL, 275 judges from 33 countries assessed the entries, eventually awarding just 50 wines (0.3% of entries) the ultimate accolade of Best in Show, 149 wines (0.88% of entries) a Platinum medal and 439 wines (2.60% of entries) a Gold medal. A combined total of just over 10,500 further wines were awarded Silver or Bronze medals.

The greatest medal tally for 2018 went to France, a consistent high achiever, which amassed 12 Best in Show titles, with 3 apiece going to Burgundy and Rhone wines, with all 3 winning Burgundy wines coming from Domaine de La Vougeraie. Alsace, Bordeaux, Champagne, Languedoc-Roussillon, Loire and Provence wines were also awarded Best in Show titles, including a 2002 Piper Heidsieck Rare Champagne which judges found "fresh, pure and invigorating", and a Syrah/Cabernet Franc blend from Chateau Auzias in the Languedoc that was "lively and fragrant yet textured and deep". 22 French wines were awarded Platinum medals, with 5 a piece for the Rhone and the Languedoc-Roussillon, a region whose wines are rapidly gaining greater renown. Bordeaux gained 4 Platinum medals, and Champagne and Burgundy both 3, including another Piper Heidsieck vintage Champagne from 2008 and a further wine from Domaine de la Vougeraie, a Bâtard Montrachet from the Côte de Beaune.

A total of 87 Gold medals were spread across 10 of France's wine regions, with 17 being awarded to Languedoc-Roussillon wines, ahead of Burgundy's 16 and the Rhône's 15. Corsica won 1 Gold medal for a wine from Clos Venturi. Overall, Champagne was the most awarded of France's wine regions, winning a total of 441 medals, including significant numbers of Silver and Bronze winning wines. In a much-deserved second place was the Languedoc-Roussillon which took home 427 medals overall. Not far behind both was Bordeaux, winning a total of 410 medals.

Second in the running globally for the most medal wins was Italy with 2,131, including 6 Best in Show titles that highlight the country's wealth of prominent wine regions with winners from Trentino Alto-Adige, Lombardy, Piedmont, Veneto, Sicily and Tuscany. Spanish wines performed valiantly, receiving a total of 1,331 medals, including an impressive 9 Best in Show from across Rioja, Rías Baixas, Priorat, Sherry and Cava. Neighbouring Portugal amassed a total of 420 medals, including 5 Best in Show titles for Port & Madeira wines. As the United Kingdom's wine industry continues to grow, so do its submissions to the Decanter World Wine Awards and 2018 saw a total of 118 medal-winning wines from 138 tasted, including 3 Platinum medals awarded to English sparkling wines.

Some of the more intriguing results that the 2018 Decanter World Wine Awards revealed include;

- A Platinum medal winning Barovo from Tikveš winery in Macedonia's Central Republic made using Kratošija and Vranac, a variety indigenous to the Balkans
- Vinařství Gotbery Ryzlink Rýnský, a Platinum medal winning unoaked Riesling from Moravia in the Czech Republic
- 3 Platinum medal winning wines from Switzerland, including two white wines from the Valais produced from lesser-known grape varieties; Flétrie Blanc de Glace from Gregor Kuonen made with Petite Arvine and L'Ambassadeur Des Domaines Diego Mathier by Adrian & Diego Mathier, a blend of Savagnin, Petite Arvine and Marsanne

- A Value Platinum medal winner from Georgia; an unoaked, reasonably priced Qvevri Kisi from Maranuli in the Kakheti region
- 8 Gold medal-winning wines from China (up from 3 in 2017) that reveal the increasing breadth of wine production in the country, including a 100% Vidal Chateau Changyu Ice Wine from Liaoning, a Talia Winery Petit Manseng from Shandong and a Marselan from Zhongfei Winery in Xinjiang
- 3 Gold medal winning Koshu wines from Japan, including 2 from Grace Winery in Chubu Province; Kayagatake Koshu and Private Reserve Koshu
- 2 Gold medal winning wines from Moldova; Dor Reserve Merlot from Bostavan and a Traminer-Muscat Ottonel Ice Wine from Fautor

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About the Decanter World Wine Awards

Launched in 2004, the Decanter World Wine Awards is the world's largest wine competition. The 2018 edition saw a panel of 275 judges from 33 countries, including 59 Masters of Wine and 25 Master Sommeliers, judge a total of 16,903 wines submitted from 61 countries. This year a new system to award top medalists was introduced – Platinum and Best in Show. Gold medal-winning wines are re-categorised by grape or style and re-tasted by a panel of Regional and Co-Chairs. The wines are judged according to their origin and the judges are aware of countries, regions, sub-regions, grapes, vintages and price bands. The winners are awarded Platinum medals. Those with a price band below £15 are awarded a Best Value Platinum medal. In a separate tasting, the 4 Co-Chairs of the judging panel select the Best in Show from the Platinum winners, and are aware of origins, grape varieties, vintage and price bands. Full details on the judging process can be found on Decanter.com.
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