

## **Decanter World Wine Awards 2018 – Results Press Release – South Africa**

### **The diversity of South African winemaking is rewarded as results are revealed 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 and Kazakhstan.

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 famous sweet wine Vin de Constance was the only South African wine to receive the competition's highest honour of Best in Show. The 2014 vintage was found by judges to be "gratifying, diverting and generous", and was one of only two sweet, non-fortified wines to be awarded Best in Show. 5 South African wines were awarded Platinum Medals, including one Value Platinum title for Strandveld's First Sighting Sauvignon Blanc 2017 from Cape Agulhas, the southernmost tip of Africa, which was the only Platinum Medal winner not from Stellenbosch. The other 4 wines to receive a Platinum Medal were; DeMorgenzon Reserve Chenin Blanc 2017, Uva Mira D.W. Syrah 2015, Spier 21 Gables Cabernet Sauvignon 2014 and Rustenberg Peter Barlow Cabernet Sauvignon 2015. A further 28 Gold Medal-winning wines showcased the great diversity of wine producing regions in South Africa today, with winners coming from Elgin, Swartland, Walker Bay, Cape Agulhas, Western Cape and Citrusdal Mountain. Among the winning wines were 3 Pinotages, the native South

African grape that is seeing a distinct revival in quality and interest; Escapades Pinotage 2016, Kaapzicht Steytler Pinotage 2015 and Moreson MKM Pinotage 2015. The Gold Medal category really showed the breadth of wine styles being produced in South Africa today, from straight Chardonnays including Boschendal's Appellation Series 2016 and Bouchard Finlayson's Missionvale 2016, through Cabernet Sauvignons such as Kleine Zalze's Vineyard Selection 2015, to Stark-Condé's Chenin Blanc-Roussanne-Viognier-Verdelho Field Blend 2017, Stellenrust's Stellenbosch Manor Cinsault 2017 and a Limited Release Grenache 2016 from Stellenbosch Vineyards.

Overall, South African wines received 555 medals in the Decanter World Wine Awards 2018, including 245 Silver and 276 Bronze Medals, meaning over 80% of a total of 683 wines submitted won a medal. Chile, who submitted a similar amount of wines to the competition, received fewer medals in total (438 medals). South African wines also gained more medals than submissions from Portugal (420 medals), Argentina (378 medals) and New Zealand (351 medals).

In other results, 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, 22 Platinum medals and 87 Gold medals in an overall total of 2,580. Second in the running for the most medals was Italy with 2,131, and 6 Best in Show titles that highlighted 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. Missing the podium this year was Australia, whose wines received 804 medals in total. South Africa took fifth place behind Australia with a medal tally of over 100 more than next place Chile.

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](https://www.decanter.com).