

Italy wins Best in Show for unusual indigenous grape variety and medal haul places the country second globally

The 2019 Decanter World Wine Awards, the world's largest wine competition, sampled and judged close to 17,000 wines, entered from 57 different countries. The scale of this event emphasises the global appeal and highlights the prestige attached to receiving a coveted Decanter Medal. Wine lovers will rejoice in the knowledge that more medals have been awarded this year, continuing the trend of improving wine quality and the broader range of regions now producing wine.

This year, nearly 2,500 wines from Italy were awarded a medal, showcasing the country's wealth of prominent wine regions and calibre of winemaking. Standout regions in 2019 include the classic regions of Tuscany and Piedmont as well as the lesser-known Campania and Sicily.

Campania had a particularly interesting run of medals. The region saw 86% of wines entered awarded with a medal, a 26% increase on 2018 entries. Standing out from the crowd was the **Cenatiempo Kalimera**, a single varietal made using the indigenous Biancolella grape, hailing from the island of Ischia. This wine was awarded Best in Show for its 2017 vintage. The region also scooped two Platinum medals for **Quintodecimo Vigna Quintodecimo Riserva 2014**, and for the **Cantina Sanpaolo di Claudio Quarta Riserva 2013**.

Tuscany has seen an uplift in medals by 27%, with four additional Platinum awarded this year. Alongside this the region picked up a Best in Show for the **Cigliano 2016**.

Piedmont collected an impressive six Platinum, 15 Gold medals and one Best in Show, impressing the judges once more with classic wines of quality and style.

To complete the quartet of success, Sicily celebrated with 76% of its wines awarded, including two Platinum and three Gold medals amongst the haul.

Now in its 16th year, 2019 has seen a rise in successes from lesser known wine producing regions such as Eastern Europe, China and Mexico. Classic regions in France, the USA, and Australia once again performed well.

During the week-long event, over 280 of the world's top wine experts tasted and debated the merits of each bottle entered. Only a total of 50 (a mere 0.3% of all wines entered) were awarded the highly sought-after accolade of "Best in Show". A further 148 wines were awarded with a Platinum medal and 480 with Gold. This year 74% of wines entered were awarded with a medal compared to 66% in 2018, highlighting the ongoing efforts wine producers put in to improve their offer each year.

Co-chair of the awards, Michael Hill Smith MW comments "2019 has yet again seen some exciting wines with revelations coming out of Greece, Madeira and China. The Decanter World Wine Awards really helps producers to raise their profile internationally and for consumers faced with the prospect of such choice; choosing a bottle with a DWWA sticker on it, particularly a Gold or Platinum should reassure them that the wine has been through a rigorous judging process, against much competition and you can trust the quality. With more education on wine so widely available nowadays, and plenty more opportunities to travel, now really is the time to have an interest in wine."

ENDS

For further information on the Decanter World Wine Awards please visit
<https://www.decanter.com/decanter-awards/>

Notes to Editors

Launched in 2004, the Decanter World Wine Awards is the world's largest wine competition. The 2019 edition saw a panel of over 280 judges from 30 countries, including 70 Masters of Wine and 23 Master Sommeliers.

In 2018 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 3 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.

Please note that the full results of the 2019 competition will be announced on decanter.com on Tuesday 28 May.

