

## **Australia continues to impress with Shiraz and Chardonnay, winning six Best in Show at the Decanter World Wine Awards 2020**

*After a challenging year for the global wine industry, there's finally reason to raise a glass!*

**22<sup>nd</sup> September 2020:** There's perhaps never been a time the global wine industry has been so hard hit, but the world's largest and most influential wine competition is giving reason to celebrate with the release of its 2020 results. After completing judging under strict Covid safety guidelines that included innovations such as proximity lanyards and bespoke disposable spittoons, the Decanter World Wine Awards has today announced its 2020 winners.

Now in its 17th year, the 2020 competition has seen a rise in successes from lesser-known wine producing regions such as the South & Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans, which showcased their impressive quality and value for money. Classic regions in France, Italy, Spain, the USA, and Australia once again performed well.

During the judging month, 116 expert wine judges including 37 Masters of Wine and nine Master Sommeliers, tasted and debated the merits of 16,518 wines from 56 countries. Only a total of 50, just 0.3% of all wines entered, were awarded the highly sought-after accolade of "Best in Show", and six of these were won by Australia.

The Best in Show medals were dominated by Australia's signature grapes, Shiraz and Chardonnay, with each award-winning wine coming from a different region across the country. For Shiraz, the **Gaff Old Vine Single Vineyard Shiraz 2014** from the Barossa Valley, **Anderson Hills O Series Shiraz 2018** from Lenswood in the Adelaide Hills and **Mr. Riggs Shiraz 2017** from McLaren Vale were all awarded Best in Show. Chardonnay collected two Best in Show for the **Fraser Gallop Estate Parterre Chardonnay 2018** from Margaret River and the **Soumah Hexham Vineyard Equilibrio Chardonnay 2018** from the Yarra Valley, whilst the **Morris Old Premium Rare Topaque NV**, a fortified wine from Rutherglen region in Victoria, was the sixth wine awarded the top Best in Show accolade.

In addition to the Best in Show, the fortified wines of Rutherglen collected a further Platinum (**Campbells Isabella Rare Topaque NV**), seven Gold, seven Silver and five Bronze medals.

South Australia's Barossa overtook 2019's top performing region, Margaret River, to collect the most medals in 2020, and in addition to the one Best in Show, triumphed with three Platinum, eight Gold, 58 Silver and 61 Bronze, with single varietal Shiraz, classic GSM and Shiraz Cabernet Sauvignon blends dominating the medals awarded.

From the wider Barossa GI, Eden Valley picked up two Platinum medals (**Grant Burge Balthasar Shiraz 2018** and **Pewsey Vale Museum Reserve The Contours Riesling 2003**).

Andrew Jefford, Co-Chair says, "The Decanter World Wine Awards really helps producers to raise their profile internationally. It can do the same for wine-producing regions and nations, too. Our judging system - including re-tasting of all Golds, with possible promotion to Platinum - is something we are very proud of. We explain it as often as we can. So, when consumers see a DWWA sticker on a bottle, be it Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze, they can be reassured that the wine in question has been judged by regional experts and specialists before receiving its medal. We discuss, we argue, we fight it out...that's all part of the judging fun. Even with social distancing! But that's also how you get the results which have made the DWWA an international wine benchmark."

After much uncertainty on whether the awards could take place this year, Decanter was meticulous in its approach and innovation to ensure the judging went ahead, introducing strict safety measures that were put in place, including temperature checks on the door, PPE for all judges and staff, disposable spittoons with antibacterial powder that solidifies with liquid and is later incinerated with other hazardous waste, proximity tags worn on lanyards that vibrate when you are less than two metres from another person, and isolated tasting areas with designated facilities.

Co-Chair Sarah Jane Evans MW comments, "The competition has been terrific, it has been a perfect atmosphere to taste and judge this year. After months of lockdown and uncertainty everyone has been delighted to be back again, working together, sharing ideas and thoughts, and above all, focused on picking out the great wines from this year. There have been some wonderful discoveries. As ever the Best in Show day was tough, narrowing down to 50 top wines".

A full list of winners can be viewed online at <http://awards.decanter.com/DWWA>

## **ENDS**

The Decanter World Wine Awards Co-Chairs and key spokespeople are available for interviews, please use the contact details below to arrange.

### **Notes to Editors**

Australia was awarded a total of 779 medals, with six Best in Show, 17 Platinum, 58 Gold and 332 Silver and 366 Bronze.

The 2020 awards introduced new innovations, including bespoke disposable spittoons and proximity lanyards, to ensure Covid safety guidelines were adhered to in Decanter's first socially distanced judging month, held at the Future Plc offices in Canary Wharf. A panel of 116 expert wine judges blind-tasted 16,518 wines from 56 countries over four consecutive weeks in August.

Only a total of 50 wines were awarded the highly sought-after accolade of "Best in Show", and the four-week tasting culminated in 178 Platinum, 537 Gold, 5,234 Silver and 7,508 Bronze medals being given out.

Full details on the judging process can be found on [www.decanter.com/decanter-awards/](http://www.decanter.com/decanter-awards/).

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