

California and Oregon awarded three Best in Show for the USA whilst Canada boosts medal success with results up 35% at the Decanter World Wine Awards 2020

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

22nd 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 top accolade of "Best in Show", and the USA collected three of these alongside one Platinum, 16 Gold, 137 Silver and 142 Bronze, with 37% more medals than 2019.

The wine producing regions of California and Oregon triumphed once again, with California collecting two Best in Show for the **Alpha Omega ERA 2017**, a Cabernet Sauvignon/Malbec blend, and **Trefethen Cabernet Sauvignon 2017**. Oregon's **Domaine Serene** gathered the final Best in Show for its **Mark Bradford Vineyard Pinot Noir 2016**, as well as the producer winning four Gold and 16 Silver for its other exciting Pinot Noir and Chardonnay styles.

Further north, Washington State collected a quarter of the Gold medals awarded to the USA, winning four medals for bold Cabernet Sauvignon wines from the 2017 vintage. The **Double Canyon Cabernet Sauvignon 2017** and **Mark Ryan Winery Dead Horse Cabernet Sauvignon 2017** were awarded Gold, and former NFL quarterback Drew Bledsoe's **Doubleback Winery** collected Gold medals for both its **Estate Reserve 2017** and **Cabernet Sauvignon 2017**.

Elsewhere in North America, Canada increased its medal success with results up 35%, achieving one Platinum, 15 Gold, 153 Silver and 176 Bronze. Icewines performed particularly well, collecting eight of the Gold medals and a Platinum for the **Andrew Peller Signature Series, Oak Aged Icewine Vidal Blanc 2018**. The Okanagan Valley in British Columbia, a region famous for producing some of the highest quality icewine across the globe, collected the other seven

Gold medals. Three Gold medals were also won by wineries in the Similkameen and Thompson Valleys in British Columbia.

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>

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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

The USA and Canada both increased their medal success in 2020. The USA was awarded three Best in Show, one Platinum, 16 Gold, 137 Silver and 142 Bronze, 37% more medals than 2019. Canada is celebrating a 35% increase in awarded medals, achieving one Platinum, 15 Gold, 153 Silver and 176 Bronze.

Launched in 2004, the Decanter World Wine Awards is the world's largest and most influential wine competition.

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/.

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