

Conca de Barberà, Sherry and Bierzo shine as Spain impresses with a diversity of styles 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. Spain demonstrated its unique expertise in both Sherry and unfortified wine styles, collecting 1,568 medals from across its regions, which included four Best in Show, 20 Platinum, 68 Gold and 537 Silver medals.

Out of the four Best in Show winning wines, two were awarded to Sherry producer **Lustau**, the **V.O.R.S. Oloroso NV** and the **30 Years Old V.O.R.S.** The Sherry category picked up a further six Platinum, eight Gold, 32 Silver and 22 Bronze.

Reds took centre stage in the Best in Show category this year, with one awarded to **Peique Ramón Valle Mencia 2018** from the Bierzo DO. Torres also picked up a Best in Show medal for the second year running for their **Grans Muralles 2016** from Catalunya's Conca de Barberà DO.

Elsewhere, Rioja took home four Platinum medals, two of which were red: **Heredad Pangua Sodupe Crianza 2016** and **Marqués de Riscal Barón de Chirel Reserva 2016**. The other two were white blends: **Marqués de Tomares Gran Reserva 2010** and **Bodegas Nivarius Edición Limitada 2016**.

Spain's leading sparkling wine categories Cava and Corpinnat also won a Platinum medal each for **Bodegas Ca N'Estella Rabetllat i Vidal Gran Reserva Brut Nature 2015** (Cava) and **Gramona III Lustrós Brut Nature 2012** (Corpinnat). The **Paco & Lola Albariño 2019** also picked up a Value Platinum award for its 100% Albariño from Rías Baixas.

Wines from the regions of Toro, Priorat, Ribera del Duero, Rueda and Utiel Requena completed Spain's impressive haul of Platinum medals.

Commenting on Spain's results this year, Co-Chair Sarah Jane Evans MW says, "For me Spain is one of the most exciting countries in the world. We've had a real diversity of grapes and styles entered and that excitement absolutely came through on the judging tables."

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

Spain was awarded a total of 1,568 medals, with four Best in Show, 20 Platinum, 68 Gold and 537 Silver and 939 Bronze. Of the four Best in Show, Sherry was particularly strong this year, earning two of the accolades, as well as six Platinum and eight Gold.

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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For press office enquiries please contact marketing@decanter.com
decanter@clementinecom.com / @clementinecommunications