

English wine continues to excel 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. English wine producers enjoyed another successful year with entries up 7% compared to 2019 and 21 counties across the UK delivering medal-winning wines.

The two wineries that stood out this year to win the prestigious accolade of Best in Show were both whites, one a sparkling and the other still. In West Sussex, **Roebuck Estate** won for its **Classic Cuvée Brut 2014**, and Kent's **Simpsons The Roman Road Chardonnay 2018** picked up its first Best in Show after gaining a Silver medal last year for the 2017 vintage. In addition, English wines won three Platinum, five Gold, 94 Silver and 46 Bronze medals.

Chapel Down in Kent had another fantastic year with all seven wines entered awarded medals, including two Platinum (**Chapel Down Kit's Coty Coeur de Cuvée 2014**, **Chapel Down Three Graces 2015**), two Gold (**Kit's Coty Blancs de Blancs 2014**, **Kit's Coty Chardonnay 2017**) and three Silver. **The Grange Pink NV** from Hampshire won the third Platinum medal for the UK.

Elsewhere in Kent, **Gusbourne** was awarded Gold for **Blanc de Noirs 2016**, in addition to eight Silver and one Bronze, whilst **Hoffmann & Rathbone**, a boutique winery in East Sussex, collected Gold for its **Blanc de Blancs Brut 2012**. Small but mighty producers such as Devon's **Lyme Bay Winery**, Hampshire's **Leckford Estate** and **Busi Jacobsohn** from Kent will also be raising a glass, picking up Silver medals for their sparkling wines.

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 UK was awarded a total of 150 medals, including two Best in Show, three Platinum, five Gold, 94 Silver and 46 Bronze. Sparkling wine continues to dominate and showcase its class, winning 65% of the total medals.

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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