

South America toasts success at the Decanter World Wine Awards with a Best in Show for Argentina whilst Bolivia and Uruguay earn their place on the global stage

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. Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Uruguay entered this year's awards, and it was Argentina's **Colomé Lote Especial Tannat 2018**, a single varietal Tannat from Salta that collected the top accolade of "Best in Show", one of only 50 medals awarded.

South America won 16 Platinum medals, including 50% of the Value Platinum medals awarded, with Argentina picking up two and Chile three. From Argentina, it was **Amalaya Malbec 2019** and **Viñalba Reserve Malbec-Touriga Nacional 2019**, whilst Chile saw **Cono Sur Single Vineyard Block No.25 La Palma Syrah 2018**, **Vyf Wines Reserva Carménère 2018** and **Ritual Sauvignon Blanc 2018** awarded.

Eight of South America's 17 Best in Show and Platinum medals went to Argentinian Malbec-based reds but notable exceptions came from Chile, which in addition to its two Value Platinum award-winning wines, collected another Platinum for **VIK's La Piu Belle 2015**, a Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenère and Syrah blend. Chile was awarded 318 medals, including five Platinum medals, nine Gold, 101 Silver and 203 Bronze.

Alongside its Best in Show, Argentina was awarded ten Platinum, 13 Gold, 160 Silver and 198 Bronze, amassing 383 medals and confirming its position as one of South America's leading winemaking nations.

Other South American countries that enjoyed success this year include Uruguay and Bolivia, who both outshone their previous track record, with Uruguay collecting 36% more medals than

in 2019 and winning a Platinum medal for **Bouza Sin Barrica Tannat 2018**. Bolivia, who after winning just one Bronze in 2019, collected four Silver for its red wines and four Bronze medals.

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

South America achieved a total of 774 medals, including one Best in Show, 16 Platinum, 25 Gold, 282 Silver and 450 Bronze. Argentina reigned supreme, winning 50% of the medals awarded, collecting one Best in Show, 10 Platinum, 14 Gold, 160 Silver and 198 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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