

Search

Web Search by YAHOO!

- COMMENTS
- SHARE
- EMAIL
- PRINT
- REPRINTS
- ENLARGE TEXT
- Like Recommend
- Tweet 2

Beaulieu Vineyard 2009 Tapestry Reserve takes top honor in North Coast Wine Challenge



Judge Tim McDonald tastes wine during the first North Coast Wine Challenge at the Hilton Sonoma Wine Country Hotel in Santa Rosa on Wednesday, May 29, 2013.

BETH SCHLANKER / PD

Related Links

FULL LIST: 2013 Press Democrat North Coast Wine Challenge winners

More Information

PD's North Coast Wine Challenge page

Buy tickets to the public tasting

SEARCH WINE CHALLENGE DATABASE

More Videos



Snapshots: Wine Country



11th Annual Sonoma County Pruning



Photos: Day One At The Volcom Fiji Pro (Red Bull)

The ultimate winner in the first annual Press Democrat North Coast Wine Challenge, held last week in Santa Rosa, was the Beaulieu Vineyard 2009 Tapestry Reserve, a classic red Bordeaux blend.

Two dozen judges sifted through 930 wines in the blind tasting, then voted to find the best from throughout the heart of Wine Country. When their scores were tabulated, a total of 121 wines received gold medals, six won Best of County awards, five won Best of Class and the Beaulieu red was judged to be the biggest winner of all, the "Best of the Best."

Photo Galleries



North Coast Wine Challenge

MOST READ MOST EMAILED MOST RECENT

- Spring Lake hit-run driver gets 6 months in jail
- World War II-era planes soar at airport
- Sheriff: Petaluma crash into big rig was suicide attempt
- Sonoma salesman suspected of not registering as sex offender
- County schools improve in latest state rankings

PHOTOS YOUR PHOTOS



2013 CMT Music Awards



Esther Williams (1921-2013)



Wings Of Freedom Tour



Mendocino County Jail Garden &



Lake Mendocino Water Level



North Coast Wine Challenge

EVENTS CALENDAR MORE EVENTS SUBMIT EVENT

6 THU	7 FRI	8 SAT	9 SUN	10 MON
-------	-------	-------	-------	--------

Search



[News Flash: This Girl Can Drive It 225](#)
(Revolution Golf)



[Darius Rucker, Lady Antebellum in Perfe...](#)
(CMT)



[These 5 Things Start Cancer in Your](#)
(Newsmax)

A classic red Bordeaux blend of cabernet sauvignon, merlot, cabernet franc, malbec and petit verdot grapes, the Beaulieu red also received the “Best of Napa County” award and the Best of Class award for “Best Red.”

The Rutherford vineyard was established in 1900 by Georges de Latour and has served as a benchmark for Napa Valley cabernet sauvignon ever since. The wine garnered 98 points and inspired one judge to comment, “Please pour this over my naked body.”

“Best of Sonoma County” was a three-way tie for winner, among Sivas-Sonoma 2011 Sauvignon Blanc; Kokomo 2012 Grenache Rosé, Pauline's Vineyard Estate; and Trombetta Family Wine 2011 Pinot Noir, Gap's Crown Vineyard.

The Sivas-Sonoma 2011 Sauvignon Blanc, a wine produced by Don Sebastiani & Sons from Sonoma County grapes, also won Best of Class award for “Best White Wine.” It received 98 points and was described as “fragrant and extremely complex” by the judges.

The Kokomo 2012 Grenache Rosé, Pauline's Vineyard Estate, also won the Best of Class award for “Best Rosé,” garnering 98 points for being “elegantly made.”

The Trombetta Family Wine 2011 Pinot Noir, Gap's Crown Vineyard, sourced from vineyards in the Petaluma Gap region of the Sonoma Coast AVA, was deemed “soft, sultry, deep” by the judges, who gave it a score of 98.

Double win

The Navarro Vineyards 2012 Late Harvest Gewurztraminer won “Best of Mendocino County” and received 97 points for its “bright honeysuckle” flavors, perfect for outdoor sipping. It also won the Best of Class award for “Best Dessert” wine.

Shed Horn Cellars, 2010 Non Typical Red Blend, which combines zinfandel, cabernet sauvignon, petite sirah, barbera and syrah grapes, won the “Best of Lake County.” Judges awarded it 96 points, praising the Middletown winery's unusual red blend for its “bright, clean, good fruit.”

“Best of Marin County” went to the DeLoach Vineyards 2010 Marin Pinot Noir, a wine produced by Boisset Family Estates of St. Helena. The wine was sourced from four different vineyards in Marin County, one of the coolest American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) in California. The cool temperatures translate into a longer growing season, resulting in balanced wines with natural acidity.

FIND LOCAL BUSINESSES

Keyword(s):

Location:

POPULAR SEARCHES

Powered by [LOCAL.COM](#)

“Best of Solano County” went to the GrapeHeart Vineyards, 2010 “The Beat,” Proprietary Red, Estate Grown. GrapeHeart Vineyards was founded by local heart surgeon Dr. Ramzi Deeika and his wife, Isabel, who are dedicated to promoting heart health.

The contest, co-hosted by The Press Democrat and Vineyard & Winery Management, was open to wineries that source fruit from the North Coast, including the AVAs in Napa, Sonoma, Lake and Mendocino counties and parts of Marin and Solano counties.

Winning the Best of Class award for “Best Sparkling Wine,” the Breathless Wines North Coast NV Brut received 98 points and was described as “perfectly balanced” and “delicious” by the judges. The sparkler was made with a blend of chardonnay and pinot noir grapes using the venerable “méthode champenoise” (a secondary fermentation in the bottle).

Strength of field

Led by Chief Judge Daryl Groom of Groom Australian Premium Wines, the judges, drawn from all over Northern California, holed up for two days at the Hilton Sonoma Wine Country Hotel in panels to work through the entries. Groom noted that the winners amounted to about 14 percent of the wines entered.

“That shows the strength and caliber of these wines and reinforces that we are undoubtedly a world-class growing region,” Groom said.

The Press Democrat will host a public tasting of the winning wines on July 14 at Santa Rosa Junior College's Shone Farm near Forestville.

The goal of the contest was to bring new focus and attention to the wines of the entire North Coast region, said Steve Falk, CEO of Sonoma Media Investments, which owns The Press Democrat.

“Most people agree that many of the best wines in the world are produced right here in Northern California ... and many wine competitions have repeatedly confirmed that fact,” Falk said.

“There has never been, however, a wine competition that focused solely on the North Coast and tried to determine the best of the best.”

The competition was managed by Vineyard & Winery Management, a multi-media company based in Santa Rosa that publishes a wine trade magazine, puts on wine trade shows and manages several other wine competitions as well.

“This one is more local... from the epicenter of the North Coast,”

said Robert Merletti, owner/chairman of Vineyard & Winery Management. "We wanted the six counties to come together and compete for bragging rights."

In the future, organizers said, the idea is to move the contest around so that each of the participating counties will have a chance to host it.

Groom said the response of the North Coast wineries exceeded the organizers' initial expectations.

"We're in our first year, so if we got 500 entries it was going to be a good start," he said. "As the industry heard about the way we were judging and who the judges were, the wineries got very interested, and it generated a last-minute rush."

By comparison, judges at the 2012 Sonoma County Harvest Fair wine competition received and reviewed 949 wines made from grapes grown in Sonoma County.

The 2013 San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition tasted through more than 5,500 entries from across the country.

Judge panels

The judging panels were assembled to reflect diverse points of view, with one winemaker, one sommelier and one retailer or media person serving on each panel.

While the winemaker evaluates wine from a technical point of view, Groom said, the sommelier is going to be interested in how it pairs with food and the retailer or media person regards it from the consumer's point of view.

"We wanted it that way, so each wine has been looked at from every angle," Groom said. "We did see a lot of healthy debate between the judges."

For a gold medal to be given, all three members of the judging panel had to agree that it was worthy. The judges then converted the gold medal scores to a point score from 90 to 100.

"If it gets a gold, then it's at least a 90-point wine," Groom said. "There are a lot of buyers of wine who prefer points rather than gold medals."

For a complete list of the winners and more information on the public tasting, go to www.pressdemocrat.com/winechallenge.

Staff Writer Diane Peterson can be reached at 521-5287 or diane.peterson@pressdemocrat.com