

69 BUYERS GATHER IN SONOMA WITH VINEXPO

24th September, 2018 by Patrick Schmitt

As many as 69 buyers from 27 countries arrived in Sonoma County yesterday to take part in the second chapter of Vinexpo Explorer.

The buyers, who hail from around the world, but primarily the Asia-Pacific region, have been brought to Sonoma by the exhibition organiser as part of an initiative launched last year.

As previously reported by [db](#), Vinexpo Explorer was conceived to immerse leading buyers in the winemaking and culture of a wine region or country, with Vienna the host city for the first edition of this novel concept.

Rick Tigner, who is CEO of Jackson Family Wines, and a member of the board of Vinexpo, was instrumental in bringing the concept to Sonoma County, believing that the wine region lacks global awareness.

"Wherever I may travel, I am still so amazed how little people know about Sonoma County," he said, when addressing the attendees of Vinexpo Explorer this morning.

In contrast, he said that "most people tend to know about Napa and its AVAs", referring to Sonoma's neighbouring wine region, which has a higher level of global recognition.

With 18 AVAs in Sonoma, he added that "there is a lot to know", mentioning an "amazing array of appellations", from Alexander Valley to Chalk Hill, Knights Valley and Petaluma Gap.

Continuing, he said that the county was "one of the best places to live on earth", mentioning the combination of "great weather" and "great food", as well as of course the high quality of the wine.

Stressing the purpose of bringing the buyers to Sonoma, he said, "We need storytellers; we need people to take our story back to their neighbourhoods."

Speaking the previous evening, where the attendees were welcomed to Sonoma at a reception hosted by Jean-Charles Boisset at his Buena Vista Winery – the oldest in California – Tigner mentioned the wildfires that raged in Sonoma almost exactly one year ago.

Acknowledging their horrific impact, he said that the vineyards of Sonoma had been instrumental in slowing the spread of the flames, and in some cases, saving communities.

However, he also made it clear that one year on the wine region was functioning as normal.

So, concluding, he stated, "Please let people know, Sonoma County is open for business."

Vinexpo Explorer Sonoma in numbers:

- 69 buyers
- 27 countries
- 6 from Canada
- 5 from Latin America
- 36 from Asia-Pacific
- 21 from Europe

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Jean-Charles Boisset hosted the buyers at his Buena Vista Winery on the first evening of Vinexpo Explorer. Addressing attendees at the welcome reception, he said, "We need purchase orders to survive, but also your enthusiasm and expertise." Picture credit: Scott Hampton