



VIRGINIA WINE

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Office of the Governor

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Virginia's Horton Vineyards Wins the 2019 Governor's Cup® with 2016 Petit Manseng Wine

Gold-Medal winning white wine joins 11 other Virginia wines to comprise the 2019 Governor's Cup Case®

Feb. 26, 2019 (RICHMOND) – Governor Ralph Northam awarded the 2019 Virginia Wineries Association's (VWA) Governor's Cup to Horton Vineyards for their 2016 Petit Manseng at the 2019 Governor's Cup Gala. The Gala took place Tuesday evening, February 26, at the Main Street Station in Richmond, Virginia.

All wines competing in the Governor's Cup competition must be made from 100 percent Virginia fruit. The Petit Manseng marks Horton's first Governor's Cup winning wine.

"It is my pleasure to award this honor to Sharon Horton and her entire winery and vineyard team, including winemakers Michael Heny and Andrew Reagan," said Governor Northam. "Horton Vineyards is among Virginia's true wine pioneers renowned for first growing many of the varieties that have taken hold in Virginia. In addition to the winning wine, the eleven wines included in the 2019 Governor's Cup Case highlight the outstanding quality of wines being produced within our Commonwealth."

Horton Vineyards' 2016 Petit Manseng is composed of 90 percent Petit Manseng, 5 percent Viognier and 5 percent Rkatsiteli grapes. The wine is 100 percent estate-grown including their Berry Hill vineyard fruit. All fruit was hand-harvested and underwent whole cluster press. Fermentation occurred in 90 percent French oak and 10 percent stainless steel. Tasting notes state that the wine shows intensity and an explosion of flavors across the palate with a lingering acidic finish.

"This year's case winner is especially exciting for both Horton Vineyards and the Virginia wine industry as a whole," commented Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bettina Ring. "It is rare for a white wine to win the Governor's Cup and it is the first time a Petit Manseng has been the overall winner. Also significant is that three of the wines in this year's case are made with Petit Manseng grapes. This

underscores a reoccurring pattern of many outstanding wines in Virginia being produced from lesser known varietals.”

The case is comprised of the top 12 scoring wines chosen from more than 500 entries coming from 102 wineries. The esteemed panel of judges was directed by Jay Youmans – one of only 51 Masters of Wine (MW) in the U.S. The panel diligently ranked each wine according to a unified scoring system.

Alongside Horton Vineyards’ 2016 Petit Manseng, the 11 wines included in the 2019 Governor’s Cup Case are:

- Barboursville Vineyards 2017 Vermentino Reserve
- Early Mountain Vineyards 2016 Eluvium
- Glen Manor Vineyards 2015 Cabernet Franc
- King Family Vineyards 2016 Mountain Plains
- King Family Vineyards 2016 Meritage
- Paradise Springs Winery 2015 Meritage
- Virginia Wine Works 2016 Hamlet Vineyards Eltham
- Virginia Wine Works 2016 Michael Shaps Petit Manseng
- Virginia Wine Works 2016 Michael Shaps Raisin d’Etre White
- Virginia Wine Works 2015 Michael Shaps Tannat
- Virginia Wine Works 2014 Upper Shirley Zachariah

Within the case, there is wide representation from all parts of the state including Central, Northern, Southern and Eastern Virginia, and the Shenandoah Valley. This broad geographical diversity highlights Virginia winemakers’ ability to listen to their land and navigate the state’s varied landscape and conditions.

Virginia winemakers have developed a fluency in reading the signs from their soil and growing distinctive varietals that have found a home in Virginia. A testament to this is the variety of wines in this year’s case: three Petit Mansengs, a Tannat, a Cabernet Franc, a Vermentino and six red blends.

Now in its 36th year, the competition is a result of a partnership among the gubernatorial-appointed Virginia Wine Board (VWB), the Virginia Vineyards Association (VVA), and the VWA, which owns and manages the competition. Any wine made from 100 percent Virginia fruit was eligible for the competition, while ciders and fruit wines had their own category and medalists. All entries included an affidavit with a certification of 100 percent Virginia fruit and vineyard particulars, including grower names and location.

According to a 2017 economic impact study, the Virginia wine industry employs more than 8,200 people and contributes almost \$1.37 billion to the Virginia economy on an annual basis. Nationwide, Virginia is in the top six states in number of wineries and wine grape production. More than 2.2 million tourists visited Virginia wineries in 2015.

For interviews and photo requests, please contact Annette Boyd at (804) 402-1896 or Annette.Boyd@Virginiawine.org.

For a complete list of previous Governor's Cup winners and information about the Virginia wine industry, please visit <http://www.virginiawine.org/governors-cup/awards/> or call the Virginia Wine Marketing Office at (804) 344-8200.

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