



PHIPPS

Les Champions du Monde: France takes home highest number of medals at International Wine Challenge

French winemakers picked up more medals overall and more Gold medals than any other country in the competition

French winemakers received an impressive 445 medals in the latest round of the International Wine Challenge (IWC), the world's most influential wine competition. This was more than any other country in Tranche 1 of the 2019 competition, leaving 2nd and 3rd places far behind: Australia with a total of 393 medals and Portugal with 181. In addition, France was awarded 23 (one more than Australia) – more Gold medals than any other country.

Within France, Champagne and Burgundy were the dominant regions, collecting eight Gold medals each.

Charles Heidsieck led the way for Champagne, collecting four Gold medals, while Chablis producer William Fèvre proved to be the leading producer in Burgundy, also with four Gold medals.

William Fèvre's Chablis Grand Cru Vaudésir 2016 was the joint highest scoring wine in the competition with 97 points. The other 97-pointer was also made from Chardonnay – the McGuigan Shortlist Chardonnay 2015 from Australia.

Many of France's major wine-producing regions collected at least one Gold medal:

- Maison Pierre Sparr Successeurs' Riesling scored Gold for Alsace
- Bordeaux Château Haut Bailly's Berry Brothers & Rudd Pessac-Léognan 2016
- Château Rouquette Sur Mer's Cuvée Henry Lapierre 2016 and Les Domaines Paul Mas Château Lauriga Bastien 2016 from Languedoc Roussillon
- Domaine De Rocheville its Le Page Cabernet Franc in the Loire
- Domaine des Sénéchaux Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2016 from the Rhône
- Maison Jean Loron from Beaujolais

The overall standard from the last region certainly impressed one of the judges. Oz Clarke, Co-Chairman of the IWC, said: "Beaujolais is back! There were some thrilling, crunchy reds from the 2016 and 2017 vintages."

For Charles Metcalfe, Co-Chairman of the IWC, the highlights of the French wines competing were: "The wonderful Burgundies, as ever, and also the Alsace whites and southern French reds."

The first part of the 2019 International Wine Challenge – Tranche 1 – saw 212 wine experts from 23 countries judging the wines over four days in London. Tranche 2 judging will take place from April 1-11, 2019, with the results announced on May 8.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

The International Wine Challenge

In its 36th year, the International Wine Challenge is accepted as the world's finest and most meticulously judged competition. The IWC assesses every wine 'blind' and judges each for its faithfulness to style, region and vintage. Each medal-winning wine is tasted on at least three separate occasions by a minimum of 12 different judges including Masters of Wine. Awards include medals (Gold, Silver, Bronze) and Commended awards. The IWC is committed to helping consumers discover great wine, and the medals displayed on winning bottles offer a trusted guarantee of quality.

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