



PHIPPS

## PRESS INFORMATION

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July

International Wine Challenge celebrates UK wine industry at live awards evening



The International Wine Challenge, the world's most influential, impartial and rigorously judged wine competition, brought the UK wine industry together at a live awards evening on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June to celebrate the winners of this year's competition.

In an open-air event space at the Kia Oval with social distancing measures in place, the International Wine Challenge unveiled its Champion and Merchant Award winners for 2021 and shone a spotlight on the extraordinary achievements of the teams behind those businesses. New awards were introduced this year to recognise the impressive work undergone by the trade this year, adapting to the everchanging landscape of life under Covid19.

**The Harrow at Little Bedwyn** was awarded **IWC Restaurant Initiative of the Year**, impressing the judges with the hundreds of free meals it supplied to the local community during lockdown, despite having closed in March 2020, as well as repurposing its restaurant to create an extremely successful gourmet takeaway service. Highly Commended was Newington Green restaurant, **Tranga**, who were a lifeline to the local community during the pandemic.

**IWC On-Trade Supporter of the Year** was awarded to **Hallgarten & Novum Wines** who worked with its suppliers to launch the widely praised initiative to supply 100,000 free glasses of wine to its on-trade customers. Hallgarten & Novum also received the award for **IWC Merchant Wine List of the Year** and was Highly Commended for IWC Large Agent of the Year and IWC Specialist Merchant of

the Year 2021 - Southern & Eastern Europe. **Bibendum Wine** and **Liberty Wines** were both Highly Commended for the **On-Trade Supporter of the Year** award. Liberty Wines also picked up **IWC Large Agent** and **IWC Wine Educator**, as well as **IWC Specialist Merchant** for **Australia** and **Italy**.

Impressing the judges with the scale of its logistics, the level of service it continued to offer its customers and the support given to its suppliers, **The Wine Society** took home **IWC Dynamic Merchant of the Year** and went on to win the top award of **IWC Merchant of the Year 2021**. **The Wine Society** achieved an astounding four further awards including **IWC Wine Club of the Year** and **IWC Specialist Merchant of the Year** for **Austria**, **Portugal** and **Regional France**. Highly Commended for the new IWC Dynamic Merchant of the Year award was Welsh-based wine importer and wholesaler, **Daniel Lambert Wines**, who has been a mouthpiece for the trade post-Brexit, highlighting the bureaucratic and financial challenges faced by businesses in its wake.

Also new for this year was the **IWC National Merchant of the Year** award which went to **Majestic Wine**, who had an extremely busy year implementing all-round improvements across service, training and their drinks range. The changes, along with a new website, reflect the passion of the business and investment in its future success.

Retailers of all sizes were celebrated in the awards ceremony on Wednesday evening, including supermarkets across the UK. **Waitrose** was awarded **IWC Supermarket of the Year** as well as **IWC Specialist Merchant of the Year** for **England** and **Co-op** was awarded **IWC National Convenience Chain of the Year**. **Marks & Spencer** also had a stellar evening winning two **IWC Specialist Merchant of the Year** awards for **Rosé** and **Champagne and Sparkling** as well as **IWC Own Label Range of the Year**.

Other awards announced on the night included:

- IWC Small Agent of the Year 2021: Daniel Lambert Wines
- IWC Medium Agent of the Year 2021: Bancroft Wines
- IWC Online Retailer of the Year 2021: Laithwaites
- IWC Innovator of the Year 2021: Tring Winery for The Online Wine Tasting Club
- IWC Small Independent Merchant of the Year 2021: Highbury Vintners
- IWC Large Independent Merchant of the Year 2021: Cambridge Wine Merchants

**Helen McGinn, Co-Chair and IWC UK Merchant Awards judge commented that:** *‘It’s always important to take stock and recognise the brilliant work of people behind the wonderful industry we work in, and this year even more so. We were blown away with the entries we received and the support, collaboration and innovation that so many businesses have brought to the industry this year.’*

The International Wine Challenge 2021 also revealed today its Top 10 scoring wines from this year’s competition, which included the ‘best in show’ Champion wines announced during the awards evening. For the first time in the history of the competition, a Greek wine clinched the title of Champion White Wine, ranking alongside other top scoring entries from both old and new world countries.

**10 Best Wines in the World as judged by the International Wine Challenge 2021:**

France	Clos de la Roche Grand Cru Cuvée Cyrot Chaudron Hospices de Beaune 2019, Maison Albert Bichot	<b>IWC Champion Red Wine 2021</b> , International Pinot Noir Trophy, French Red Trophy, Red Burgundy Trophy
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France	Vintage 2008, Piper-Heidsieck	<b>IWC Champion Sparkling Wine 2021</b> , Champagne Trophy, Vintage Classic Blend Champagne Trophy
Greece	Sigalas Santorini Barrel 2020, Domaine Sigalas	<b>IWC Champion White Wine 2021</b> , Greek White Trophy
Italy	Vinsanto di Carmignano Capezzana Riserva 2013, Tenuta Di Capezzana	<b>IWC Champion Sweet Wine 2021</b> , Italian Sweet Trophy
Spain	Lustau Palo Cortado V.O.R.S 30 Years, Emilio Lustau	<b>IWC Champion Fortified Wine 2021</b> , Sherry Trophy, Palo Cortado Trophy
Australia	Wolf Blass Grey Label McLaren Vale Shiraz 2019, Wolf Blass Wines	<b>International Shiraz Trophy</b> , McLaren Vale Shiraz Trophy
Austria	Sauvignon Blanc Kitzreck-Sausal Südsteiermark 2019, Weingut Schneeberger	<b>International Sauvignon Blanc Trophy</b> , Austrian Sauvignon Blanc Trophy
France	Corton Charlemagne Grand Cru Domaine du Pavillon 2019, Maison Albert Bichot	<b>IWC Organic Trophy 2021</b> , International Chardonnay Trophy, French White Trophy, White Burgundy Trophy
Germany	Erbacher Siegelsberg Riesling Grosses Gewächs 2015, Weingut Schloss Reinhartshausen	<b>International Riesling Trophy</b> , German White Trophy
New Zealand	Valli Pinot Noir Gibbston Vineyard 2019, Valli Vineyards	<b>IWC Sustainable Trophy 2021</b> , New Zealand Red Trophy, Central Otago Pinot Noir Trophy

The International Wine Challenge Merchant Awards UK, which celebrates its 30th Anniversary in 2021, recognizes and rewards the outstanding achievements of the UK wine trade, from merchants and distributors to educators and marketers. This year's winners were announced on 30th June and the full list of those awarded can be seen [here](#), and the ultimate winners from IWC 2021, including IWC Winemakers of the Year, can be seen [here](#).

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**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**The International Wine Challenge**

In its 38<sup>th</sup> year, the International Wine Challenge is accepted as the world's most rigorous, impartial and influential wine competition. The International Wine Challenge assesses every wine 'blind' and judges each for its faithfulness to style, region and vintage. Awards include medals (Gold, Silver, Bronze) and Commended awards. Trophies are awarded to the very best wines in each category. The International Wine Challenge 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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