



PHIPPS

## PRESS INFORMATION

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July

International Wine Challenge celebrates the On & Off-Trade during its 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 7<sup>th</sup> July to celebrate the winners of this year's competition.

During the ceremony at the prestigious Hurlingham Club in London, the International Wine Challenge celebrated the achievements of businesses in the on- and off-trade, along with a number of new award categories.

This year's awards saw **Liberty Wines** crowned with the top award of **IWC Merchant of the Year**. It also snapped up a further six awards, including **Merchant Educator of the Year**, **Specialist Merchant Australia** and **Specialist Merchant Italy**, which it has won for three consecutive years. **Goedhuis & Co** held on to the title of **Specialist Merchant Burgundy** and picked up **Specialist Merchant En Primeur** this year. **The Wine Society** also achieved multiple successes in the categories of: **Specialist Merchant Austria**, **Specialist Merchant Portugal**, **Specialist Merchant Regional France**, and **Wine Club of the Year**.

Merchant **Ultracomida/Spanish Wines Direct**, a newcomer in the Welsh category was awarded **IWC Regional Merchant Wales 2022**.

**Naked Wines** won **IWC Online Retailer of the Year** for the first time and is one of the youngest online retailers to ever win this award. It captured the judges' attention with its unique e-commerce platform which runs similarly to a social media network, giving its 964,000 member community the opportunity to speak directly to wine producers. Judges were touched by the community aspect this online platform provides and were also impressed by the retailer's ethos and message of unison, giving a friendly feel that buzzes with life.

This year, the **Innovator of the Year** award went to **Vagabond Wines** for two highly impressive campaigns launched within the past year. The first, Vagabond SOMM, is a personalised wine

subscription service that intuitively picks up on customers' likes and dislikes in order to deliver sample bottles tailored to their preferences. Its second campaign, 'Tap & Pour,' is a smartphone app that links to customers' bank cards and, when held against a sensor in the store's enomatic wine machines, it reveals tasting notes as well as the option to purchase and pour the wine directly. The judges noted that these initiatives paved the way for providing consumers access to a wide variety of wines.

**Thirty Fifty**, the well-established education and e-commerce platform, was awarded **Consumer Educator of the Year**, a brand-new award for 2022. Owners Chris and Jane Scott were recognised for providing great content and delivering private and corporate WSET-certified wine tastings with genuine passion and personality. Thirty Fifty is cleverly named after the latitudes where most of the world's wine grapes are grown, between 30 degrees and 50 degrees latitude, North and South of the equator. The online platform has shown resilience throughout the covid pandemic. It continues to expand its database and also hosts an e-commerce wine shop that stocks the wines tasted at its events.

This year **Supermarket of the Year** was awarded to **Waitrose** for the third year in a row, while Marks & Spencer was Highly Commended in this category.

The International Wine Challenge also recognised exceptional businesses in the on-trade with two new Wine List awards. The **Restaurant Wine List of the Year – Contemporary** was awarded to nationwide Tapas chain **Ibérica** and the **Restaurant Wine List of the Year – Fine Dining** went to two Michelin-starred **Le Gavroche** based in London.

**Helen McGinn, Co-Chair and IWC UK Merchant Awards judge commented that:** *'The judges were truly overwhelmed at the initiative and excellence within the level of entries for the 2022 awards. Each year as the categories grow it's never easy to pick winners from the amazing candidates that champion our wonderful industry.'*

Other awards announced on the night included:

- IWC Consumer Campaign of the Year 2022 – The Whisky Exchange for The Champagne Show 2021
- IWC Sake Brewer of the Year 2022 – Niizawa Sake Brewery Co Ltd.
- IWC Fairtrade Award 2022 – Spa Reserve Chenin Blanc Fairtrade 2021
- IWC Sustainable Trophy 2022 Trinty Hill Wines Gimblett Gravels Chardonnay 2022
- IWC Organic Trophy 2022 – Giesen Single Vineyard Clayvin Syrah 2019

During the awards ceremony, The International Wine Challenge also revealed its 'best in show' Champion wines and Great Value winners for 2022. Tesco had a stellar evening, taking the trophies for both **Great Value Sparkling** and **Great Value Champion Red** as well as being crowned **IWC Own Label Range of the Year**. The full list of Champion and Great Value winners is below:

IWC Great Value Champion Sake 2022	Niizawa Sake Brewery Atagonomatsu Betsushikomi Honjozo
IWC Great Value Champion Sweet 2022	The Ned Noble Sauvignon Blanc 2021
IWC Great Value Champion Fortified 2022	Morrisons The Best Oloroso
IWC Great Value Champion Sparkling 2022	Tesco Finest Premier Cru Champagne NV
IWC Great Value Champion Rosé 2022	Cintu Ile de Beaute Corsican Rosé 2021
IWC Great Value Champion White 2022	Paul Mas Réserve Languedoc Blanc 2021

IWC Great Value Champion Red 2022	Tesco Finest Montepulciano D'Abruzzo 2019
IWC Champion Sake 2022	Inoue Seikich Sawahime Ginjo
IWC Champion Sweet Wine 2022- Alois Kracher Trophy	Tenuta Di Capezzana Vinsanto di Carmignano Capezzana Riserva 2014
IWC Champion Fortified Wine 2022 - Manuel Lozano Trophy	Bodegas Tradicion Oloroso Tradicion VORS
IWC Champion Sparkling Wine 2022 - Daniel Thibault Trophy	Rare Champagne Millésime 2008
IWC Champion White Wine 2022	Trinity Hill Wines Gimblett Gravels Chardonnay 2020
IWC Champion Red Wine 2022	Maison Delas Frères Les Bessards 2019

The International Wine Challenge Merchant Awards UK recognises 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 7<sup>th</sup> July, and the full list of those awarded can be seen [here](#). The ultimate winners from IWC 2022, including IWC Winemakers of the Year, can be seen [here](#).

**ENDS**

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**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**The International Wine Challenge**

In its 39<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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