



PHIPPS

PRESS INFORMATION

Wednesday 5th July

International Wine Challenge celebrates UK wine trade at Industry Awards announcement



Sip Champagnes, winners of IWC Sparkling Retailer 2023

Last night, the International Wine Challenge (IWC), the world's most influential, impartial and rigorously judged wine competition, brought the UK wine industry together at its annual awards announcement. During the prestigious ceremony at The Hurlingham Club in London, the IWC unveiled its Champion Wines and Industry Award winners for 2023.

Amongst the new awards for this year were 'Unsung' Specialist of the Year awards, which give retailers with less well-known specialist categories the chance to shine. The **IWC Unsung Independent Specialist 2023** went to **Novel Wines**, a unique online wine merchant that specialises in undiscovered wines from around the world. Owners Ben Franks and Gyorgy Zsiga aim to make the wine market a more exciting place to shop, by sourcing wines from passionate small producers and community co-operatives, often from regions that aren't even known for their wines. This year's

IWC Unsung Multiple Specialist 2023 went to **Co-op**, the largest seller of Fairtrade wine in the world. Judges noted that “Co-op has shown real commitment to developing its range of Fairtrade wines over the last 20 years, working closely with producers to improve living conditions for entire communities.”

This year’s **IWC Online Retailer 2023** award went to **The Wine Society**, which impressed judges with its customer-centric approach, including the commitment to hold prices in the face of duty increases, as well as its clear action plan on sustainability. **IWC Wine Club 2023** was awarded to **Naked Wines’** Fine Wine Club. Members are sent monthly mixed cases which come complete with downloadable tasting notes from the winemakers behind the bottles as well as a live tasting with Wine Director and Master of Wine, Ray O’Connor.

Liberty Wines was awarded **IWC Agent 2023** as judges praised its “investment in people, systems and sustainable practices,” noting that Liberty Wines has “led the way for many years in the latter area but is not standing still.” Liberty was also recognised as **IWC Italian Specialist 2023** and **IWC Trade Educator 2023**, with judges noting that the use of technology combined with face-to-face training made for a particularly impressive education offering.

Other specialist awards went to **Lea & Sandeman** which was named **IWC French Specialist 2023**, **Grape Britannia** which was named **IWC GB Specialist 2023** and **Graft Wine Company** which was named **IWC Australian Specialist 2023**.

Retailers of all sizes were celebrated at the awards ceremony and it was a great night for supermarkets across the UK. **Tesco** took home the top accolade of **IWC Supermarket 2023** which has been awarded to Waitrose for the past three years. The quality of Tesco’s own label wines was also recognised with the **IWC Own Label Range of the Year 2023**. Of the six IWC Great Value Champion Awards announced on the night, Tesco took home the top awards for both sweet and fortified wines. Other supermarkets to be recognised in the IWC Great Value Champion Awards were **Marks & Spencer** which won the awards for both sparkling and red wines and **Waitrose** which took home the Great Value Champion award for rosé wines.

IWC Great Value Award winners 2023:

IWC Great Value Champion Sweet 2023	Tesco Finest Dessert Semillon 2018
IWC Great Value Champion Fortified 2023	Tesco Finest Pedro Ximenez
IWC Great Value Champion Sparkling 2023	Marks & Spencer Cremant de Bordeaux Brut
IWC Great Value Champion Rosé 2023	Waitrose Loved and Found Sciaccarellu Rosé 2021
IWC Great Value Champion White 2023	Esk Valley Estate Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2022
IWC Great Value Champion Red 2023	Marks & Spencer& Collection Susana Balbo Malbec 2022

Nine retailers across the UK were named as IWC Regional Retailers of the year. In London, **Highbury Vintners** won this title back from Lea & Sandeman while around the country there were many returning winners including Aberystwyth-based **Ultracomida**, Stirling’s **Woodwinters Wines & Whiskies** and **Old Chapel Cellars** in Truro.

IWC Regional Retailer Award winners 2023:

IWC Regional Retailer Scotland 2023	Woodwinters Wines & Whiskies
IWC Regional Retailer Northern England 2023	D. Byrne & Co. Fine Wines
IWC Regional Retailer Central England 2023	Hattersley Wines
IWC Regional Retailer Wales 2023	Ultracomida

IWC Regional Retailer Northern Ireland 2023	James Nicholson Wine
IWC Regional Retailer South-West England 2023	Old Chapel Cellars
IWC Regional Retailer South-East 2023	The Oxford Wine Company
IWC Regional Retailer Eastern England	The Wee Vinoteca
IWC Regional Retailer London 2023	Highbury Vintners

Exceptional on-trade businesses were also recognised in the Industry Awards. This year's award for **Restaurant Wine List – Fine Dining** went to Hampshire's luxury hotel, **Heckfield Place**, while the award for **Restaurant Wine List - Contemporary** went to **etch. by Steven Edwards** in Hove, whose wine list proudly champions smaller, family run producers with an emphasis on sustainability and terroir. New for this year, the **Restaurant Wine List - Sustainability** award went to **Farmyard** in St Leonards on Sea.

Other awards announced on the night included:

- IWC On-Trade Wine Supplier 2023: Hallgarten and Novum wines
- IWC Consumer Educator 2023: West London Wine School - Jimmy Smith
- IWC Single Site Retailer 2023: Vineyards of Sherborne
- IWC Small Multiple Retailer 2023: Cambridge Wine Merchants
- IWC Large Multiple Retailer 2023 : Vagabond
- IWC Buying Team 2023: Majestic Wine
- IWC Sparkling Retailer 2023: Sip Champagnes

The full list of IWC UK Industry Awards winners, announced on 4th July, can be seen [here](#). The ultimate winners from the International Wine Challenge 2023, including IWC Winemakers of the Year, can be seen [here](#).

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS:

The International Wine Challenge

Launched in 1991, the Industry Awards (formerly Merchant Awards) recognise and reward the achievements of the incredible teams behind the UK's most innovative wine businesses. In the past thirty years, the wine industry has undergone huge changes and this year, the awards were completely overhauled to make them more relevant in the modern, post Covid era. This year's updated award categories cover the entire industry, from agents to educators, retailers to restaurants.

In its 39th year, the International Wine Challenge is widely acknowledged as the world's most rigorous, impartial, influential and global 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.

For more information on the IWC, please contact the IWC team at Phipps
iwc@thisisphipps.com : +44 (0) 20 3968 2455