



CSWWC 2019: It's not a guessing game

Tom Stevenson rounds up the news, views, and trophies behind this year's Champagne & Sparkling Wine World Championships

There can be good reasons for knowing the identity of wines, and *The World of Fine Wine* specializes in this open format under its Déjà Bu and Per Se tastings, but for a competition, the aim is to find the best on the day and entrants need to be confident that this is achieved fairly and without any preconceived prejudice. Blind, therefore, is the only option.

That does not mean that a judge has never looked at the results of a blind tasting and wondered why specific wines did perform better. It is something that is easier to acknowledge at home, when opening a bottle straight from the cellar: if it does not taste right or, even worse, if it tastes bad but without any obvious fault, it has to be accepted for

what it is, with the label in view. Just open another bottle, compare the two and dump the poor performer down the kitchen sink.

After a competition, however, a judge may be left wondering. During the judging process, it is easy enough to call for another bottle, if a wine has an obvious fault, but what if it has a subliminal fault? What if, totally blind, it merely seems correct but poor or unexciting? An undetectable trace of TCA can scalp the fruit, which under blind conditions would literally be taken as a lack of fruit, not a fault. This problem has been exacerbated in Champagne by the spread of low or no added sulfur dioxide at the time of disgorgement, whereby wines can be

bright, fresh, and fruity on launch, yet become oxidative within months, and these faults are forgiven by the mindless appreciation of the so-called oxidative style in the world's premier reductive wine. Little wonder that judges are sometimes left wondering after a competition.

It is not a guessing game, and the judges are not allowed to know the identity of the wines, but behind the scenes those involved in the logistics know the names, of course. It is there that Orsi Szentkiralyi, our Tasting Quality Control Director, opens a second bottle of every wine that has not been awarded a gold or silver medal and compares it to the bottle the judges tasted. Any sign of bottle-

variation and that wine is seamlessly fed back into the judging schedule. We have been successfully weeding out bottle-variation for five years, and it is such an easy solution to the problem that I cannot understand why we remain the only competition to follow this precautionary practice. It should be compulsory for any competition that strives to deliver non-discriminatory results.

A sixth sense

This was our sixth year and, as the entries poured in, there was a sense that everything was coming together. While entries had increased over the previous five years, we had spent much of the time explaining that, except for emerging regions, we did not want to waste our time ploughing through bronze-medal quality, let alone so-called Commended. As a result, although we have attracted new producers every year, much of that growth was countered by the underperforming wines dropped by the previous year's new participants, who followed our advice. In a way, we were pleased, as it was gradually raising the base-level of all entries, but it did have the effect of slowing down the competition's rate of growth. Until 2019, that is, when entries suddenly increased by one third, with an average 75 percent increase from the USA, Canada, Spain, Australia, New Zealand, Moldova, Germany, and China.

Sparkling wine is the total focus of the CSWWC. At other competitions, the fate of a sparkling wine is all too often determined by tasters who are more used to still wines, which can be frustrating to producers who know better. This is why our coverage of sparkling-wine production has increased every year.

There are three primary reasons why producers enter the CSWWC on a regular basis. First, it is solely a sparkling-wine competition. Second, it is judged exclusively by sparkling specialists. And, third, every wine is assessed by the same specialist judges every year.

In 2019, the advantages of this ethos seem to have been recognized more widely by the world's sparkling-wine producers. By early April, most of the entries were in and it was shaping up to be the most memorable year the

Tony Jordan



Tony Jordan enjoying a pre-prandial drink at Sopranos wine bar on the final evening of CSWWC in 2018. He phoned ahead to say he was on his way, so the team had this rather flamboyant concoction ready and waiting for an Aussie who is not known for his love of cocktails—particularly one with a peacock feather and bucket of marshmallows!

CSWWC has had, but we had no idea just how memorable it would be and for the worst possible reason. This is the year we lost Tony Jordan.

A sad farewell to Tony Jordan

Although 75 years of age, Tony had never had a day's serious illness in his life. He was not just fit and healthy—he was fighting-fit and looked so youthful that no-one believed his age. Each year Tony and wife Michele would enjoy a two- or three-week walking holiday. One year it was the Pyrenees in Spain, another it was Italy. Then there was Ireland, where he also tried to trace his family roots, and in 2018 it was the foothills of Iran, after which he emailed "Saw a lot of grapes, but no alcohol for 18 days!"

So when super-fit Tony found himself short of breath on April 20 of this year, he made an appointment to see his doctor on the Monday, and by Tuesday he was hospitalized awaiting an operation on a collapsed lung. Just one month after confirming his flights for the competition, Tony discovered the underlying cause of his collapsed lung was a particularly aggressive form of cancer, mesothelioma. He emailed "This means I won't be around for a lot longer and certainly cannot travel." It was that quick, and within four months he was gone. The CSWWC will always treasure his unique gift of hands-on sparkling-wine

Sparkling wine is the total focus of the CSWWC. This is why our coverage of sparkling-wine production has increased every year. In 2019, entries increased by one third

experience and scientific knowledge, which we were privileged to draw on for two weeks every year for five years, not merely when judging, but also over the many dinner conversations we shared. (See the obituary in WFW 66, pp.44–45).

New judge: George Márkus

Whenever I talked privately to Tony about his replacement (when all we had in mind was his eventual retirement), there was never any disagreement between us: it had to be George (or György in his native Hungarian). This was Tony's cast-iron belief, based on tasting and discussing thousands of sparkling wines with George in his capacity as reserve judge over the past five years. Tony was always impressed by George's tasting skill and his grasp of the technicalities of sparkling-wine production. Over the past six years, including 2019, George has tasted more sparkling wines from all over the world than anyone outside of the CSWWC.

New reserve judge: Simon Stockton

With George vacating the reserve judge seat, his place has been taken by Simon Stockton, who has been our competition steward for the past three years. An Australian living in the UK, Simon specializes in all things effervescent and has a "Mastering Champagne" Diploma from the University of Reims. The position of reserve judge is indispensable. We need someone who not only specializes in sparkling wine and is highly skilled at tasting this particular category, but also someone who tastes alongside us and can discuss all the issues knowledgeably and intelligently. This is because there are only three judges at the CSWWC and we taste everything, bringing a consistency to the scoring of wines that cannot be matched by competitions with 50, 100,

or more judges. It is one of our great strengths, but it also makes us extremely vulnerable. If one judge picks up a bug, the reserve judge has to take over immediately, and that requires him to be in the zone at all times.

A new steward: Harriet Wright
With Simon taking George's place, we needed someone new as competition steward, and with less than three weeks before the competition started, we had very little time to make a decision, and no room for any error because all the final results depend on the competition steward being on the ball. Simon made it look easy, but it is not: he was just brilliant at doing it. The job is a combination of utter boredom and intense concentration, not to mention being in charge of local logistics (we learned from year one not to rely on taxis). The judges cannot go into the preparation area, but we sometimes need confirmation that a particular wine adheres to the provenance and style it claims to be and we are judging by, making the competition steward a vital link. With the exception of the middle weekend, we judge two weeks non-stop, so we also need someone with whom we feel relaxed. Karl at Sensible Wine Services suggested Harriet Wright and I offered her a contract within 48 hours. At the time I knew that I had either made CSWWC's biggest mistake or its luckiest decision. Thankfully, it was the latter.

The results 2019

With a total of 185 golds and 212 silvers, this was the most successful CSWWC to date, reflecting a huge increase in entries and a continuing rise in base-line quality. This was the first year that Italy won more medals than France, with 71 golds and 92 silvers, but Champagne again romped home as the most successful region, with 61 golds and 49 silvers.

CSWWC Lifetime Achievement Awards

For those who might wonder why an obvious name is missing from this year's Lifetime Achievement Awards, it was too soon after her loss to ask Tony Jordan's wife Michele to fly halfway around the world to collect it. She has kindly agreed to be with us next year and, in the meantime, we have renamed our World Champion Rising Star Trophy after Tony.



Michel Fauconnet



Régis Camus



Ruben Laurentis



Jean-Baptiste Lécaillon

This year's Lifetime Achievement Awards go to:

Michel Fauconnet

The *chef de caves* of Champagne Laurent-Perrier from 2005 until 2020, when he hands over to Dominique Demarville. Michel started at Laurent-Perrier in 1973 and spent 30 years under the tutelage of the diminutive but dynamic Alain Terrier. Without a shadow of doubt, the most important achievement of Michel's career has been the recent introduction of Grand Siècle iterations, which identify the three constituent years, enabling collectors to cellar and follow each release.

Régis Camus

The *chef de caves* of Champagne Rare, and formerly of Charles and Piper-Heidsieck. I first met Régis when he was the *chef de caves* at Champagne Jacquart and was immediately impressed by the silk purse he produced out of the 1987 vintage, which was a sow's ear of a year, if ever there was one. In 1997 he took over from the legendary Daniel Thibault, and not only maintained his mentor's extraordinary high quality at Charles Heidsieck, but surpassed it at Piper-Heidsieck. Now he is enjoying the autumn of his career focusing on the prestige cuvée Champagne Rare.

Ruben Laurentis

The dynamism and vision of the Lunelli family has enabled Ferrari-Trentodoc to take its place on the world stage, where it has built a global reputation, but it is the wines of Ferrari-Trentodoc that have created and perpetuated this reputation, and it is Ruben Laurentis who makes those wines. Ruben has won the Sparkling Wine Producer of the Year award twice, helping to create one of the world's greatest sparkling-wine brands.

Jean-Baptiste Lécaillon

The *chef de caves* and vice-president of Champagne Louis Roederer. Jean-Baptiste Lécaillon has won an astonishing 50 gold medals at the CSWWC and, up to 2018, no fewer than 22 Best in Class and 17 trophies, including the Supreme World Champion trophy an unprecedented three times. We believe that's enough achievement for several lifetimes!



NATIONAL CHAMPION TROPHIES

BEST FUTURE RELEASES

These are not eligible for any trophy but still deserve recognition.

BEST AUSTRALIAN FUTURE RELEASE: Sidewood Estate 2014 Sidewood Isabella Rosé;
BEST CHAMPAGNE FUTURE RELEASE: Laurent-Perrier 2008 Brut Millésimé;
BEST DELUXE CHAMPAGNE FUTURE RELEASE: Ruinart 2007 Dom Ruinart Rosé

BEST ARGENTINE SPARKLING WINE

Chandon Argentina NV Cuvée Réserve Pinot Noir

Mendoza, Argentina (75cl, 12%); 100% Pinot Noir (11.5g/l RS)

The winner is Best in Class Argentine Blanc de Noirs, a beautifully made wine that has a hint of peach to its color and an attractive red-fruit aroma, with complexing notes of pastry and vanilla. It is fresh, crisp, and unusually linear for pure Pinot, with an easy-going, fruit-forward style and a fluffy mousse.

BEST AUSTRALIAN SPARKLING WINE

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN NON-VINTAGE BRUT: House of Arras NV Brut Elite Cuvée 1501;
BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN VINTAGE BRUT: Chandon Australia 2015 Vintage Brut;
BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN BLANC DE BLANCS: Taltarni Vineyards 2015 Blanc de Blancs;
BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN ROSÉ: Chandon Australia 2009 Late Disgorged Rosé

The winner:

House of Arras NV Brut Elite Cuvée 1501

Tasmania, Australia (75cl, 13%); 49% Pinot Noir, 42% Chardonnay, 9% Pinot Meunier (5.2g/l RS)

A serious sparkling wine with deep fruit and creamy-toast aromas that are really complex and evolved for a Non-Vintage blend. The palate is plush and mouthfilling, with a generosity that is rich in age-derived complexity, yet not lacking in fruit, with fresh grapefruit and mango all over the glass. A reductive style that is firm, with a long finish and simply really very good (tautology intended).

BEST BULGARIAN SPARKLING WINE

Midalidare Sparkling Wine NV Brut in Magnum

Thracian Lowland, Bulgaria (150cl, 12.2%); 100% Chardonnay (6.9g/l RS)

The winner is Best in Class Bulgarian Blanc de Blancs and Best in Class Bulgarian Magnum. Very pale greenish color, with serious yeast-complexed fruit never experienced before in any sparkling wine from Bulgaria. There is a fine freshness and playfulness of fruit in this very young, elegant and super-clean wine. Quite rich, biscuity tones and a very good length.

BEST CANADIAN SPARKLING WINE

Township 7 2016 Seven Stars "Polaris"

Okanagan Valley, British Columbia, Canada (75cl, 13.2%); 100% Chardonnay (8.6g/l RS)

The winner is Best in Class Canadian Blanc de Blancs, a fresh, complete, and very tasty sparkling wine with some autolytic complexity on the nose and fresh, pristine fruit on the palate and a soft mousse. If you are going to have oak, have as little as this and let the linearity and length stand proud.

Beautifully reductive nose. Extraordinarily rich, dense fruit on an impressive structure that is eternal in length and as light as a feather: How can contradictory attributes exist together? Glorious, miraculous!

BEST ENGLISH SPARKLING WINE

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Cottonworth Non-Vintage Classic Cuvée;
BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH VINTAGE BRUT: Digby Fine English 2010 Vintage Reserve;
BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ: Lyme Bay Winery NV Sparkling Rosé;
BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH VINTAGE ROSÉ & BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH MAGNUM: Bolney Wine Estate 2016 Cuvée Rosé in Magnum;
BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH BLANC DE BLANCS: Gusbourne 2014 Blanc de Blancs;
BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH NEWCOMER: Simpsons Wine Estate 2016 Chalklands Classic Cuvée

The winner:

Bolney Wine Estate 2016 Cuvée Rosé in Magnum

East Sussex, England, UK (150cl, 12.5%); 73% Pinot Noir, 12% Gamay, 14% Chardonnay, 1% Pinot Meunier (8.5g/l RS)

The elegance of this wine's pale-peach color is confirmed on its palate, which is crisp and pretty,

with sweet peachy fruit that is ripe, yet fine and fresh. Lovely, slow-evolving, yeast-complexed, fruit aromas. Exquisite mousse and a long aftertaste, nicely highlighted by biscuity notes.

BEST FRENCH REGIONAL & NATIONAL SPARKLING WINES

BEST NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Piper-Heidsieck NV Cuvée Brut in Magnum;
BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BRUT & BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE MAGNUM: Louis Roederer 2012 Brut Vintage in Magnum;
BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Palmer & Co NV Blanc de Blancs in Magnum;
BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Mumm 2012 RSRV Blanc de Blancs;
BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE NOIRS: Canard-Duchêne NV Charles VII Blanc de Noirs;
BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BLANC DE NOIRS: Pannier 2014 Blanc de Noirs;
BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ: Devaux NV D Rosé in Magnum;
BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE ROSÉ: Louis Roederer 2010 Brut Rosé in Magnum;
BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE DEMI-SEC: Piper-Heidsieck NV Cuvée Sublime;
BEST IN CLASS SINGLE-VINEYARD CHAMPAGNE: Taittinger NV Folies de la Marquetterie

The winner:

Louis Roederer 2012 Brut Vintage in Magnum

Champagne, France (150cl, 12.5%); 70% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay (9g/l RS)

The stylish, flinty-toast aromas are radiant with white-fruit character, followed by soft yet fresh and very fine fruit sitting on a creamy palate that is balanced by a soft mousse, making a long and extremely elegant Champagne, with a tapering finish focused by crisp, ripe acidity.

BEST DELUXE CHAMPAGNE

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS DELUXE CHAMPAGNE BRUT MULTIVINTAGE: Moët & Chandon NV MCIII;
BEST IN CLASS DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE & BEST IN CLASS DELUXE CHAMPAGNE MAGNUM: Dom Pérignon 2004 Brut in Magnum;
BEST IN CLASS DELUXE CHAMPAGNE BLANC DE BLANCS: Perrier-Jouët 2004 Belle Epoque Blanc de Blancs in Magnum;
BEST IN CLASS DELUXE CHAMPAGNE ROSÉ: Louis Roederer 2007 Cristal Rosé in Magnum;

The winner:

Dom Pérignon 2004 Brut in Magnum

Champagne, France (150cl, 12.5%); 53% Pinot Noir, 47% Chardonnay (7g/l RS)

Beautifully reductive nose of pristine white-fruits and yellow flowers, with a super-delicate complexity of toasty, smoky, vanilla, and gunpowdery aromas. Extraordinarily rich, dense fruit on an impressive structure that is eternal in length and as light as a feather: How can contradictory attributes exist together? Glorious, miraculous!

BEST CHAMPAGNE & BEST FRENCH SPARKLING WINE

As no other French region won a gold medal this year, the Best Champagne is also the Best French Sparkling Wine 2019.

Dom Pérignon 2004 Brut in Magnum

See *Best Deluxe Champagne*

BEST HUNGARIAN SPARKLING WINE

The winner:

Kreinbacher 2015 Brut Classic in Magnum

Nagy-Somlói Bovidék, Hungary (150cl, 12.5%); 70% Furmint, 30% Chardonnay (8.3g/l RS)

The winner is the Best in Class Hungarian Brut Vintage and Best in Class Hungarian Magnum. The complex, toasty aromas on this sparkling wine are big and yet elegant, with intense, fresh, tropical fruits, baked apples, and grilled nuts on a well-balanced palate, supported by a fine mousse and acidity mousse to provide a long finish.

BEST INDIAN SPARKLING WINE

Chandon India NV Brut

Nashik Valley, Maharashtra, India (75cl, 12.5%); 100% Chardonnay (8.6g/l RS)

For the very first time, India has won a trophy at the CSWWC. The Best in Class Indian Brut Non-Vintage has a sprightly lemon color with soft, white-fruit aromas with yeast-complexed notes, leading to a fresh and fruity, nicely structured palate that is neatly underscored by a fine line of acidity. This cuvée shows a significant step up from previous blends.

BEST ITALIAN REGIONAL & NATIONAL SPARKLING WINES

We start with a new region to the competition.

BEST CAMPANIAN SPARKLING WINE

Iorio NV Falanghina del Sannio

Sannio, Campania, Italy (75cl, 12%); 100% Falanghina (16g/l RS)

The Best Campanian Sparkling Wine is the Best in Class Campanian Extra Dry, full of fresh, zesty, sweet fruit and ripe acidity. Lovely pear and white-pepper aromas. Lovely fruit. Really clean and exotic. As we plowed through the Campanian section there was a deathly silence until we hit this lovely wine. One of the judges wrote: "Something good at last!" Falanghina would appear to be a grape variety that could go places in the off-dry style.

BEST PROSECCO

The shortlist: BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Nino Franco NV Brut; BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO VINTAGE BRUT: Nino Franco 2018 Vigneto della Riva di San Floriano; BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO VINTAGED EXTRA DRY: Masottina NV Extra Dry; BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO VINTAGED DRY & BEST IN CLASS PROSECO CARTIZZE: Nino Franco 2018

Cartizze; BEST ASOLO PROSECCO: Montelliana NV 57 Extra Dry; BEST PROSECCO DOC: Bosco del Merlo 2018 Brut

The winner:

Nino Franco NV Brut

Prosecco Superiore Conegliano Valdobbiadene DOCG, Veneto, Italy (75cl, 11%); 100% Glera (10g/l RS)

Not your normal Prosecco nose, this; although the spicy aroma with powerful hints of celery flower, celeriac, and white pepper is certainly typical Nino Franco. It is interesting to note that when we put three Nino Franco cuvées in the mix blind, we opt for the entry-level wine! Very fresh, soft, and yet firm, with a fabulous mousse to support the fruit, which is no one-hit wonder, going on and on in the mouth.

Augmented by its cousin, the Pinot Bianco, the minority Pinot Nero dominates the start, delivering pure class, from its super-stylish nose, which is highly complex and full of pristine fruit with hints of cardamom, to a glorious palate that is all about intensity, not weight, and the silkiest mousse to increase the finesse

BEST LAMBRUSCO

The shortlist: BEST IN CLASS LAMBRUSCO NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Cantina Settecani NV Vini del Re Grasarossa; BEST IN CLASS LAMBRUSCO VINTAGE BRUT: Lombardini 2018 Il Campanone; BEST IN CLASS SWEET LAMBRUSCO: Albinea Canali NV Amabile "Codarossa"; BEST VALUE LAMBRUSCO: Albinea Canali NV Secco "Foglierosse" **The winner:**

Lombardini 2018 Il Campanone

Reggiano DOC Lambrusco Rosso, Emilia Romagna, Italy (75cl, 11%); 80% Lambrusco Salamino, 20% Lambrusco Marani (11g/l RS)

Of the 9 gold medals awarded to new-wave Lambrusco this year, 7 were effectively brut style and, of those, 4 were dominated by Lambrusco Salamino, with this lush and stylish wine our ultimate pick, although all 9 were truly outstanding. Il Campanone is a genuine red wine. No wishy-washy cherryyade here. With a gorgeous but unobtrusive mousse that works well in the background when partnering food at the table in harmony with the tannins. The fruit is very fresh, with not just cherries, as expected, but also blackberries and loganberries. Very smooth and very smart.

BEST FRANCIACORTA

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA BRUT NATURE: Ca' d'Or 2011 Pas Dosè Riserva; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Lantieri de Paratico NV Brut in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE BRUT & BEST FRANCIACORTA MAGNUM: Ca' del Bosco 2009 Annamaria Clementi in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Le Quattro Terre NV Satèn Luna Mea in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Fratelli Berlucchi 2013 Freccianera Satèn in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ: Bonfadini NV Opera Rosé in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE ROSÉ: Fratelli Berlucchi 2013 Freccianera Rosa in Magnum; BEST VALUE FRANCIACORTA: Mosnel NV Brut

The winner:

Ca' del Bosco 2009 Annamaria Clementi in Magnum

Franciacorta DOCG, Lombardy, Italy (150cl, 12.7%); 55% Chardonnay, 25% Pinot Bianco, 20% Pinot Nero (2.9g/l RS)

What a stupendous wine this is! Augmented by its cousin, the Pinot Bianco, the minority Pinot Nero dominates the start, delivering pure class, from its super-stylish nose, which is highly complex and full of pristine fruit with hints of cardamom, to a glorious palate that is all about intensity, not weight, and the silkiest mousse to increase the finesse. This is a real beauty.

BEST TRENTODOC

The shortlist: BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC BRUT NATURE: Ferrari 2004 Giulio Ferrari Riserva del Fondatore in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC BRUT, BEST TRENTODOC ORGANIC WINE, & BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC MAGNUM: Maso Martis 2013 Brut Riserva in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Rotari NV Cuvée 28 in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Ferrari 2009 Riserva Lunelli Blanc de Blancs in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC BLANC DE NOIRS: Ferrari 2010 Perlé Nero in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ: Ferrari NV Maximum Rosé; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC VINTAGE ROSÉ: Ferrari 2013 Perlé Rosé; BEST VALUE TRENTODOC: Altemasi 2015 Millesimato in Magnum

The winner:

Maso Martis 2013 Brut Riserva in Magnum

Trentodoc, Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy (150cl, 12.5%); 70% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Noir (6g/l RS)

Absolutely brilliant! Racy yet mellow, with yeast-complexed aromas, yet as fresh as can be. This is an immaculate Trentodoc with a lovely soft complexity on the nose, succulently juicy, creamy-texture fruit on the palate, and a wonderfully cushiony mouth. Long, with a touch of flinty-toastiness and fine, crumbled biscuits on the aftertaste.

BEST ASTI

Cuvage NV Acquesi Asti

Asti DOCG, Piemonte, Italy (75cl, 7%); 100% Moscato (100g/l RS)

The Best Asti regional trophy goes to the Best in Class Asti Dolce Cuvage Acquesi. When it comes to sweet aromatic sparkling wine, nobody does it better than Asti, and this is Asti at its very best. Who does it better? So soft, sweet, and fragrant, the aromas are structured on an essence of rose petals, with hints of peach and nectarine. Start an afternoon tea with Champagne, but end it with Asti! What a classy Moscato.

BEST ITALIAN SPARKLING WINE

The winner:

Ca' del Bosco 2009 Annamaria Clementi in Magnum

See *Best Franciacorta*

BEST NEW ZEALAND SPARKLING WINE

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS NEW ZEALAND NON-VINTAGE BRUT & BEST-VALUE NEW ZEALAND SPARKLING WINE: Hunter's Wines NV MiruMiru; BEST IN CLASS NEW ZEALAND VINTAGE BRUT: Hunter's 2015 MiruMiru Reserve; BEST IN CLASS NEW ZEALAND ROSÉ: Hunter's Wines NV MiruMiru Rosé

The winner:

Hunter's Wines NV MiruMiru

Marlborough, New Zealand (75cl, 12%); 50% Chardonnay, 46% Pinot Noir, 4% Pinot Meunier (7g/l RS)

Fresh and zesty, with a gorgeous mousse and a creamy aftertaste. Brightly lit white-fruit aromas with a toasty impact, followed by lemon curd and green apples on a rich-textured, precision-structured palate and fine citrus-driven notes on the aftertaste.

BEST ROMANIAN SPARKLING WINE

Carassia NV Classic Brut in Magnum

Carastelec, Transylvania, Romania (150cl, 12%); 50% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir (6g/l RS)

Picking up Best in Class Romanian Non-Vintage Brut and Best in Class Romanian Magnum along the way, Carassia has again impressed the CSWWC judges. This is a fruity little number, of some elegance and with a nice touch of yeast-aged complexity.

BEST SOUTH AFRICAN SPARKLING WINE

Cederberg 2014 Blanc de Blancs

Western Cape, South Africa (75cl, 12.5%); 100% Chardonnay (5.7g/l RS)

Although this is the second year running that Cederberg has picked up the Best in Class South African Blanc de Blancs award, it is the first time it has won the national trophy, and well-deserved it



is, too. This *blanc de blancs* is crystal-clear and pale-lemon in color, with very fresh and elegant aromas, complexed by toasty-bready notes, leading to a crisp yet lush, lemon-dominated citrus palate that finishes in a nice, tight line. Fine aftertaste.

BEST SPANISH REGIONAL & NATIONAL SPARKLING WINES

BEST CAVA

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS CAVA BRUT NATURE: Maset 2014 L'Avi Pau Gran Reserva Brut Nature; BEST IN CLASS CAVA NON-VINTAGE BRUT & BEST IN CLASS ORGANIC CAVA: Vilarnau NV Brut Reserva Organic; BEST IN CLASS CAVA ROSÉ: Mascaró NV Brut Rubor Aurorae Rosé

The winner:

Vilarnau NV Brut Reserva Organic

Sant Sadurní d'Anoia, Cava DO, Spain (75cl, 11.5%); 50% Macabeo, 35% Parellada, 15% Xarel-lo (10g/l RS)

This producer won best Cava and Best Spanish Sparkling Wine trophies in 2017, so it is obviously doing something right. Vilarnau's Brut Reserva Organic cuvée stands out for the finesse of the toasty-charred notes that provide a welcome complexity to the nose, followed by a fine richness of fruit on the palate, which is long and juicy, with a lovely freshness on the finish.

BEST CORPINNAT

The shortlist:

BEST CORPINNAT MAGNUM: Gramona 2014 Imperial in Magnum; BEST CORPINNAT BRUT VINTAGE: Gramona 2009 Celler Batlle

The winner:

Gramona 2009 Celler Batlle

Corpinnat DO, Penedès, Spain (75cl, 12%); 65% Xarel-lo, 35% Macabeo (6g/l RS)

A stunningly distinctive wine! Beautiful, toast-complexed aromas, with notes of natural cork-derived vanillin, lead on to layers and layers of lovely, glossy fruit, cloves and toast, gently nursed by a fine mousse, to produce a long and sweetly fruity palate with a rich rancio complexity at the finish, with lots of clove and biscuity-toast. So serious, yet so charming and so Spanish!

BEST SPANISH SPARKLING WINE

As no other French region won a gold medal this year, the Best Champagne is also the Best French Sparkling Wine 2019.

Gramona 2009 Celler Batlle

See *Best Corpinnat*

BEST US REGIONAL & NATIONAL SPARKLING WINES

BEST CALIFORNIA SPARKLING WINE

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Roederer Estate NV Brut in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA VINTAGE BRUT: Caraccioli Cellars 2013 Brut Cuvée; BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Domaine Chandon NV Reserve Blanc de Blancs; BEST IN CLASS VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Domaine Chandon 2013 Mount Veeder Vintage; BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ: Domaine Chandon NV Reserve Pinot Noir Rosé; BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA VINTAGE ROSÉ: Caraccioli Cellars 2013 Brut Rosé

The winner:

Domaine Chandon 2013 Mount Veeder Vintage

Mount Veeder, California, USA (75cl, 12.2%); 100% Chardonnay (7.5g/l RS)

Quite possibly the best sparkling wine Domaine Chandon California has produced since it was established in 1973. Its pale-lemon color is so bright that it fairly screams freshness and intensity, which is exactly what we found. The fruit on the nose is particularly lean and intense, and this leads to a lovely purity of fruit and racy acids on the palate, where we find biscuits, brioche, and just a hint of roasted-cocoa, suggesting the emergence of a slowly evolving mix of autolytic and Maillard aromas that will bring increasing complexity to this exceptional wine if cellared further.

BEST NEW YORK STATE SPARKLING WINE

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS NEW YORK STATE BLANC DE BLANCS: Sparkling Pointe 2014 Reserve Blanc de Blancs; BEST IN CLASS NEW YORK STATE ROSÉ: Sparkling Pointe 2016 Topaz Rosé

The winner:

Sparkling Pointe 2014 Reserve Blanc de Blancs

North Fork of Long Island, New York, USA (75cl, 12.5%); 100% Chardonnay (6g/l RS)

This ripe and very stylish *blanc de blancs* reflects the late-ripening attributes of this part of Long Island. We could be critical about how much MLF and oak show through, but we gave this wine a gold medal despite those relatively minor negatives, because it was just too good not to! And, when lined up, it easily won Best New York State Sparkling Wine, beating into second place Sparkling Pointe's elegant rosé (Topaz), which won the regional trophy last year. Firm and well-structured, with a fine, silky mousse and classic, biscuity complexity on the finish.

BEST US SPARKLING WINE

Domaine Chandon 2013 Mount Veeder Vintage

See *Best California Sparkling Wine*



WORLD CHAMPION BY STYLE TROPHIES

WORLD CHAMPION CLASSIC NON-VINTAGE BRUT

The shortlist: BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN NON-VINTAGE BRUT: House of Arras NV Brut Elite Cuvée 1501; BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Cottonworth NV Classic Cuvée; BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Piper-Heidsieck NV Cuvée Brut in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS INDIAN NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Chandon India NV Brut; BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Nino Franco NV Brut; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Lantieri de Paratico NV Brut in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS NEW ZEALAND NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Hunter's Wines NV MiruMiru; BEST IN CLASS ROMANIAN NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Carassia NV Classic Brut in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS CAVA NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Vilarnau NV Brut Reserva Organic; BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Roederer Estate NV Brut in Magnum

The winner:

Lantieri de Paratico NV Brut in Magnum

Franciacorta DOCG, Lombardy, Italy (150cl, 12.5%); 80% Chardonnay, 10% Pinot Bianco, 10% Pinot Noir (5.5g/l RS)

When in magnum, Lantieri is probably one of the most underrated Franciacorta on the market. Not that it does not have a good reputation. It does. But it should be much more widely and highly regarded. This is a serious sparkling wine with a stylish, flinty, yeast-complexed aroma, and a round and radiantly fruity palate, all citrus and biscuity. Really long aftertaste.

WORLD CHAMPION CLASSIC VINTAGE BRUT

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN VINTAGE BRUT: Chandon Australia 2015 Vintage Brut; BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH VINTAGE BRUT: Digby Fine English 2010 Vintage Reserve; BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BRUT: Louis Roederer 2012 Vintage Brut in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS HUNGARIAN VINTAGE BRUT: Kreinbacher 2015 Brut Classic in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO VINTAGE BRUT: Nino Franco 2018 Vigneto della Riva di San Floriano; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE BRUT: Ca' del Bosco 2009 Annamaria Clementi in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS NEW ZEALAND VINTAGE BRUT: Hunter's Wines 2015 MiruMiru Reserve; BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA VINTAGE BRUT: Caraccioli Cellars 2012 Brut Cuvée

The winner:

Louis Roederer 2012 Vintage Brut in Magnum

See Best Non-deluxe Champagne

WORLD CHAMPION CLASSIC BLANC DE BLANCS

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN BLANC DE BLANC: Taltarni 2015 Blanc de Blancs; BEST IN CLASS BULGARIAN NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Midalidare Sparkling Wine NV Brut in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS CANADIAN BLANC DE BLANCS: Township 7 2016 Seven Stars "Polaris"; BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH BLANC DE BLANCS: Gusbourne 2014 Blanc de Blancs; BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Palmer & Co NV Blanc de Blancs in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Mumm 2012 RSRV

Blanc de Blancs; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Le Quattro Terre NV Satèn Luna Mea in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Fratelli Berlucchi 2013 Freccianera Satèn in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Rotari NV Cuvée 28 in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Ferrari 2009 Riserva Lunelli in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS SOUTH AFRICAN BLANC DE BLANCS: Cederberg 2014 Blanc de Blancs; BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Domaine Chandon 2013 Mount Veeder Vintage

The winner:

Palmer & Co NV Blanc de Blancs in Magnum

Champagne, France (150cl, 12%); 100% Chardonnay (7g/l RS)

The class shines through in this wine, from its classic charred-toast nose, with opulent coffee richness and dried-fruit complexity, to its gorgeously toasty fruit. No matter how mellow and richly textured Palmer's signature style becomes, it always retains its streamlined structure and its focus and minerality of fruit, to yield a most impressive length.

WORLD CHAMPION CLASSIC BLANC DE NOIRS

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS ARGENTINE BLANC DE NOIRS: Chandon Argentina NV Cuvée Réserve Pinot Noir; BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE NOIRS: Canard-Duchêne NV Charles VII Blanc de Noirs; BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BLANC DE NOIRS: Pannier 2014 Blanc de Noirs; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC BLANC DE NOIRS: Ferrari 2010 Perlé Nero in Magnum

The winner:

Ferrari 2010 Perlé Nero in Magnum

Trentodoc, Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy (150cl, 12.5%); 100% Pinot Noir (4g/l RS)

When made as an authentic white sparkling wine, rather than just another version of rosé, this is the rarest style and the hardest to perfect, yet we had four stunning contenders and Ferrari clearly stood out. Its reductively intense, truly toasty aroma has wonderfully complex notes of coffee, pastry, and dried-fruits. This is a pure essence of Pinot Noir, with a succulent, super-fruity, precision palate, cosseted by a soft and cushiony mousse, which enhances the finesse on its long and tapering finish.

WORLD CHAMPION CLASSIC ROSÉ

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN ROSÉ: Chandon Australia 2009 Late Disgorged Rosé; BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ: Lyme Bay Winery NV Sparkling Rosé; BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH VINTAGE ROSÉ: Bolney Wine Estate 2016 Cuvée Rosé in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ: Devaux NV D Rosé in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE ROSÉ: Louis Roederer 2010 Brut Rosé in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE

ROSÉ: Bonfadini NV Opera Rosé in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE ROSÉ: Fratelli Berlucchi 2013 Freccianera Rosa in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ: Ferrari NV Maximum Rosé; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC VINTAGE ROSÉ: Ferrari 2013 Perlé Rosé; BEST IN CLASS NEW ZEALAND ROSÉ: Hunter's Wines NV MiruMiru Rosé; BEST IN CLASS CAVA ROSÉ: Mascaró NV Brut Rubor Aurorae Rosé; BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ: Domaine Chandon NV Reserve Pinot Noir Rosé; BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA VINTAGE ROSÉ: Caraccioli Cellars 2013 Brut Rosé; BEST IN CLASS NEW YORK STATE ROSÉ: Sparkling Pointe 2016 Topaz Rosé

The winner:

Ferrari 2013 Perlé Rosé

Trentodoc, Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy (150cl, 12.5%); 80% Pinot Noir, 20% Chardonnay (4g/l RS)

This is a serious rosé by any standards, from its lovely toasty Pinot aromas, highlighted by complexing notes of spice, coffee, and gunpowder, to its richly Pinot palate, but what sets it apart from the vast army of other shortlisted contenders is the finesse, freshness, and vitality of its fluffy mousse. A very elegant and complex wine, with beautiful fruit and perfect mousse.

WORLD CHAMPION SPARKLING RED

Lombardini 2018 Il Campanone

See Best Lambrusco

WORLD CHAMPION SPARKLING AROMATIC

Cuvage NV Acquesi Asti

See Best Asti

WORLD CHAMPION LIBRARY VINTAGE

The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS DELUXE CHAMPAGNE LIBRARY VINTAGE: Louis Roederer 1995 Cristal Rosé Vinothèque in Magnum; BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC LIBRARY VINTAGE: Ferrari 1995 Giulio Ferrari Riserva del Fondatore in Magnum

The winner:

Louis Roederer 1995 Cristal Rosé Vinothèque in Magnum

Champagne, France (150cl, 12.5%); 55% Pinot Noir, 45% Chardonnay (11g/l RS)

With its super-youthful, pale-peach color and absolutely no oxidative or even noticeably evolved aromas, it would be a brave taster indeed who could seriously believe this to be almost a quarter of a century old. Its pure elegance of fruit, with hints of ripe apricot, toast, crumbly biscuit, and pastry is so delicate, remarkably fresh and refined, that it defies time, while its infinitely long and tapering finish is etched with such beautifully precise acidity that it represents the epitome of finesse.

WORLD CHAMPION RISING STAR

Midalidare in the Thracian Lowlands of Bulgaria

See Best Bulgarian Sparkling Wine



CHAIRMAN'S TROPHY

Palmer & Co 2003 Grands Terroirs in Magnum

Champagne, France (150cl, 12%); 54% Pinot Noir, 46% Chardonnay (7.5g/l RS)

Glorious, glorious, glorious! I have tasted, good, very good, excellent and, on one occasion, a truly monumental version of this wine, each variation having been dependent on the quality of the cork used to seal that wine. At the CSWWC, we tasted good and very good versions, but this is the Chairman's Trophy, and I am awarding it on the basis of my own one-off experience because I know that of the three or four authentically great 2003s, this Palmer is the best. I hope I live to see the day when MytiK Diamant corks and the jetting process have been so widely used for decades that we have eliminated bottle variation and every bottle opened reveals its full potential.



SPARKLING WINE PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

Ferrari Trentodoc

This trophy is not a matter of choice or a vote, it is completely unbiased and based exclusively

Its infinitely long and tapering finish is etched with such beautifully precise acidity that it represents the epitome of finesse

on the number of gold medals won. Historically, it has gone to either Champagne Louis Roederer or Ferrari-Trentodoc, alternating from one to the other each year. It is as if they are fighting a friendly battle of their own and to ensure triumph, they have to keep pushing the number of gold medals they win to the absolute limit. The winners were: 2014 Roederer (4 golds), 2015 Ferrari (8 golds), 2016 Roederer (10 golds), 2017 Ferrari (11 golds), 2018 Roederer (11 golds) and in 2019 it was Ferrari with ... 15 golds!



SUPREME WORLD CHAMPION

The shortlist: BEST ARGENTINE SPARKLING WINE: Chandon Argentina NV Cuvée Réserve Pinot Noir; BEST AUSTRALIAN SPARKLING WINE: House of Arras NV Brut Elite Cuvée 1501; BEST BULGARIAN SPARKLING WINE: Midalidare Sparkling Wine NV Brut in Magnum; BEST CANADIAN SPARKLING WINE: Township 7 2016 Seven Stars "Polaris"; BEST ENGLISH SPARKLING WINE: Bolney Wine Estate 2016 Cuvée Rosé in Magnum; BEST FRENCH SPARKLING WINE: Dom Pérignon 2004 Brut in Magnum; BEST HUNGARIAN SPARKLING WINE: Kreinbacher 2015 Brut Classic in Magnum; BEST INDIAN SPARKLING WINE: Chandon India NV Brut; BEST ITALIAN SPARKLING WINE: Ca' del Bosco 2009 Annamaria Clementi in Magnum; BEST ROMANIAN SPARKLING WINE: Carassia NV Classic Brut in Magnum; BEST SOUTH AFRICAN SPARKLING WINE: Cederberg 2014 Blanc de Blancs; BEST SPANISH SPARKLING WINE: Gramona 2009 Celler Batlle; BEST US SPARKLING WINE: Domaine Chandon 2013 Mount Veeder Vintage

The winner:

Dom Pérignon 2004 Brut in Magnum

See Best Deluxe Champagne

