



DISCOVER THE VINTAGE FESTIVAL WINE AWARDS

New for 2019 – the Vintage Festival Wine Awards, judged by our expert panel. The awards act as your guide to the Festival highlights, with only the very best performing wines selected. Try them for yourself as you make your way round the hall. And don't miss the Wine Awards mixed cases on p.18, put together to give you the easiest, most reassuring wine buys of the year.

HOW THE PANEL WORKS

After careful scoring and lively debate, the panel pinned the medals on the winning bottles. The winners are not just technical winemaking triumphs – they are also deeply enjoyable to drink.





CATEGORIES

Medal Winning Whites -

Whether crisp and refreshing, or rich and full, purity of flavour won the day.

Champagne and Sparklings -

The best fizz features smaller, refreshing bubbles, refined flavours and joie de vivre (even when it's not French).

Medal Winning Reds -

The key to success was the balance of fruit, oak (if used), tannin, texture and length of flavour.

Medal Winning Rosés -

A winning combination of gorgeous colour, delicate flavours, elegance and finesse.

THE AWARDS



TROPHY WINNERS

The Festival's absolute best of the best. Wines of unsurpassed quality and value.



GOLD

Best-in-class wines with exceptional aromas, flavours and texture.



SILVER

A big step up in flavour and refinement.



BRONZE

Quality that sets the standard for the region or grape variety.



THE 2019 JUDGES

Our judging panel includes some of the most colourful personalities and best tasters in the world of wine. Here's the full line-up of Vintage Festival Wine Awards Judges 2019.



Oz Clarke, Wine Awards Chairman

Oz Clarke is one of the wine world's leading experts and favourite broadcasters. His formidable reputation is based on his extensive wine knowledge and a friendly, no-nonsense approach. Through his many television appearances, Oz has made wine accessible to a whole generation of drinkers. His passion for the subject dates from his student days at Oxford University and today he's recognised as one of the world's very best tasters.

Over the years Oz has put together many special selections for Club members and has been a regular guest of honour at the Vintage Festival. We're delighted that he has led the 2019 Festival judging panel in the search for the best performing wines at the Festival.

With the awards having taken place in the run-up to the Festival, visitors can taste the winning wines knowing how Oz's expert panel rated them. Will you agree with the judges? Our advice is to taste the award-winners, and make up your own mind. We can't guarantee they'll all be to your liking, but we can assure that you'll come across worthy examples of their kind with every sip you take.



Hugh Johnson OBE, Wine Author & Club President

Hugh is considered the world's most popular (or at least best-selling) writer on wine, with nearly 20 million books sold over a 50-year career. They include The World Atlas of Wine (which he now co-authors with Jancis Robinson), The Story of Wine, his Wine Companion, How to Handle a Wine (also a film), The Art and Science of Wine ... a small library. He also writes with equal authority on gardening (tradtsdiary.com) and trees. He has been the Sunday Times Wine Club's one and only president since he co-founded it with the young Tony Laithwaite in 1973.



Tony Laithwaite, Club Founder

Hard to believe that Tony is 73, but then, it has been fifty years since he founded Laithwaite's (née Bordeaux Direct) and subsequently, with Hugh Johnson, The Sunday Times Wine Club. Tony first worked in Bordeaux in 1965 and has been travelling the world's wine regions with perennial thirst and enthusiasm for new discoveries, ever since. Of his many milestones, Tony cites the purchase of Château La Clarière in Castillon (1980) and the establishing of RedHeads Winery in South Australia (2003) as particularly important. His wife Barbara and sons Henry, Will and Tom are all, very successfully, immersed in their own areas of the drinks trade.



Will Lyons, Sunday Times Wine Columnist & Club Vice President

Described by The Spectator as having one of the finest palates in Britain, Will is a wine writer, author and broadcaster and winner of the Glenfiddich and Roederer wine writing Awards. He is Vice President of The Sunday Times Wine Club.



Mimi Avery, Brand Ambassador, Avery's Wine Merchant

Mimi began her wine career with Christopher Fielden followed by 5 years with the International Wine and Food Society. Currently Brand Ambassador for Avery's, Mimi's wine judge roles include Veritas (Paarl) and the IWSC (London).



Justin Howard-Sneyd, Master of Wine & Global Wine Consultant

After 16 years as a UK wine buyer, Justin became an international wine consultant. He sits on the Council of the Institute of Masters of Wine and produces his own wines: Domaine of the Bee in the Roussillon and Hart of Gold in England.



Beth Willard, Buying Manager

Beth is a Wine Buyer and established wine judge. Her honorary positions have included Regional Chair at the Decanter World Wine Awards and Panel Chair at Wines from Spain Top 100. Beth is a past Buyer of the Year award winner (Drink Business Awards).



Nick Taylor, Group Buying Director

Nick is Group Buying Director for Direct Wines. He was previously Managing Director at Averys. Nick's expertise in nearly every aspect of the wine trade is formidable but what really makes him tick is his love for great wines.