

Best wines in Arizona: The 2019 azcentral.com Arizona Wine Competition winners



Best Arizona wines: 2019 azcentral.com wine competition winners

The winners of The Arizona Republic wine contest photographed at the Mountain Shadows Resort in Scottsdale.

[Richard Ruelas](#), [The Republic](#) | [azcentral.com](#) Published 8:00 p.m. MT Nov. 15, 2019

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The wine named the best in the state in the 2019 azcentral.com Arizona Wine Competition was made by college students learning viticulture. Apparently, the lessons are going well.

The 2018 Viognier, a fragrant white wine produced from grapes grown at the Southwest Wine Center at Yavapai College in Clarkdale, won Best in Show at this year's judging.

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It is the first Best in Show award for students of the Southwest Wine Center. The college won the Growers Cup for Best Rosé in 2017 and has picked up other medals for its wines in previous years.

The 20 judges in the competition also named the 2018 Viognier from Southwest Wine Center the Best White Wine in the competition and, naturally, the Best Viognier.

The student-made Viognier bested 219 entries from 32 wineries.

Wineries pay a fee to enter the contest, which is run by The Arizona Republic and azcentral.com in cooperation with the Arizona Wine Growers Association. Proceeds are donated to fund scholarships and other needs at the Southwest Wine Center.

The award for Best Red went to the 2016 Garage-East Ray Rd., a Tempranillo-based blend whose name is a nod to the street in Gilbert where the winery is located. The winery also produces another red blend called Higley Rd., after its other cross street.

Best Rosé went to the 2018 Bodega Pierce Rosé, which is made from Grenache grapes grown at the winery's Rolling View Vineyard in Willcox. The winemaker for Bodega Pierce is Michael Pierce, who oversees the winemaking program at the Southwest Wine Center.

Callaghan Vineyards won Best Dessert for its 2015 Amor Fati Malvasia Bianca. That wine is made in a late-harvest style. That means the grapes were left on the vine longer than if they were being made into white wine. The extra time allows for sugars to build up as the grapes are on their way to becoming raisins.

The Amor Fati was aged in a barrel for four years without being disturbed, making the final product, as the name would indicate, a devotion to fate.

Kent Callaghan, the winemaker and owner of Callaghan Vineyards, can add this Best Dessert award to previous wins in the competition for Best White, Best Red and Best in Show. Callaghan Vineyards earned more medals than any other winery in the 2019 competition.

The awards were announced Nov. 15 at a gala at Westin Kierland Resort & Spa in Phoenix. Most of the winning wines can be sampled at the Grand Wine Festival on Saturday, Nov. 16 at Kierland Commons.

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How the wines were judged

Judging was held Oct. 21 at the Mountain Shadows Resort in Paradise Valley. The tasting was blind. Judges knew what type of wine they were being served, but not the winery that produced it.

The judges included sommeliers, chefs, bar managers, wine shop owners and distributors from resorts, restaurants and businesses in the Phoenix area.

The panel included a mix of judges who had participated in the competition previously and some first-timers. Some judges had extensive knowledge of the state's wines; others were getting their main exposure to the state's offerings at the competition.

Judges were divided into six panels. Each panel tasted a different array of wines. Judges reached a consensus as a panel on which wines earned bronze, silver and gold medals.

Double gold medals went to wines deemed worthy of a gold medal by each member of a judging panel.

The panels also, at their discretion, gave Best in Class designations to gold-medal wines deemed tops in individual categories.

Each of the six panels also nominated two wines to be considered for Best in Show. Those 12 wines were then tasted by all the judges to determine the winner.

2019 azcentral.com Arizona Wine Competition winners

Best in Show: 2018 Southwest Wine Center Viognier.

Best Red Wine: 2016 Garage-East Ray Rd.

Best White Wine: 2018 Southwest Wine Center Viognier.

Best Rosé: 2018 Bodega Pierce Rosé.

Best Dessert: 2015 Callaghan Vineyards Amor Fati Malvasia Bianca.

Best of Class is awarded in each category at the judges' discretion:

Best of Class Malvasia Bianca: 2018 Southwest Wine Center Malvasia Bianca.

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Best of Class Viognier: 2018 Southwest Wine Center Viognier.

Best of Class Rosé Single Varietal: 2018 Bodega Pierce Rosé.

Best of Class Rosé Blend: 2017 Deep Sky Vineyard Nebula.

Best of Class Graciano: 2017 Flying Leap Vineyards & Distillery Graciano.

Best of Class Mourvedre: 2017 Pillsbury Wine Company Mourvedre.

Best of Class Monastrell: 2016 Zarpara Vineyard Monastrell.

Best of Class Petite Sirah: 2016 Deep Sky Vineyard Black Hole.

Best of Class Syrah/Shiraz: 2017 Heart Wood Cellars Syrah Reserve.

Best of Class Tannat: 2017 High Lonesome Vineyard Tannat.

Best of Class Tempranillo: 2015 Caduceus Cellars Sancha.

Best of Class Rhone Style Blends: 2017 Pillsbury Wine Company Diva.

Best of Class Bordeaux Style Blends: 2017 Chateau Tumbleweed Cousin Idd.

Best of Class Other Red Blends: 2018 Burning Tree Cellars The Lotus, 2016 Chateau Tumbleweed Earth Cuckoo, 2016 Garage-East Ray Rd.

Best of Class Dessert Late Harvest: 2015 Callaghan Vineyards Amor Fati Malvasia Bianca.

Double Gold

2015 Caduceus Cellars le Cortigiane Oneste.

2018 Callaghan Vineyards Tannat.

2017 Four Tails Vineyard Amigos.

2018 Page Springs Cellars Bruzzi Vineyard Vidal Blanc.

2017 Sand-Reckoner Malvasia Bianca.

2018 Southwest Wine Center Carignan.

2018 Southwest Wine Center Refosco.

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Gold

2016 Caduceus Cellars Velvet Slippers Club Barbera.

2016 Callaghan Vineyards Cimarron Aglianico.

2017 Callaghan Vineyards Padres.

2016 Chateau Tumbleweed Cimarron Sangiovese.

2018 Dos Cabezas WineWorks White.

2018 Provisioner Wines Provisioner Red.

2018 Provisioner Wines Provisioner White.

Silver

2017 Alcantara Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon.

2018 Alcantara Vineyard Chardonnay.

2017 Alcantara Vineyard Confluence XI.

2017 Alcantara Vineyard Grand Rouge X.

2018 Arizona Stronghold Vineyards Bonita Springs Vineyard Riesling.

2018 Bodega Pierce Malvasia Bianca.

2016 Bodega Pierce Mourvedre.

2015 Bodega Pierce Petite Sirah.

2017 Burning Tree Cellars Colibri Mourvedre.

2017 Burning Tree Cellars The Peddler.

2018 Burning Tree Cellars Trademarked.

2015 Caduceus Cellars Nagual de la Naga.

2018 Caduceus Cellars Nagual del Agostina White.

2017 Callaghan Vineyards Bonita.

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2015 Callaghan Vineyards Graciano.

2016 Callaghan Vineyards Padres.

2017 Carlson Creek Vineyard Malbec.

2017 Deep Sky Vineyard Aurora.

2016 Deep Sky Vineyard Eclipse.

2016 Deep Sky Vineyard Supernova.

2018 Dos Cabezas WineWorks Pink.

2017 Flying Leap Vineyards & Distillery Estate Tempranillo Dessert.

2017 Flying Leap Vineyards & Distillery Spanish Fly.

2017 Four Tails Vineyard Big Paw.

2017 Four Tails Vineyard Double Trouble.

2015 Garage-East Higley Rd.

2017 Heart Wood Cellars Diamond Reserve.

2017 Heart Wood Cellars Petite Sirah.

2018 Javelina Leap Vineyard & Winery Prospectors Blend.

2018 Javelina Leap Vineyard & Winery Rock Slide.

2018 Laramita Cellars Arizmo.

2017 Mogollon Vineyards Humboldt.

2017 Mogollon Vineyards Malvasia Bianca.

2017 Page Springs Cellars House Mountain Petite Sirah Pick 3.

2018 Page Springs Cellars Nebbiolo Rosé.

2018 Page Springs Cellars Super Arizona.

2018 Page Springs Cellars Vino de la Familia.

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2018 Page Springs Cellars Vino de la Familia Blanca.

2017 Pillsbury Wine Company Grenache.

2017 Pillsbury Wine Company Roan Red.

2017 Pillsbury Wine Company Viognier.

2017 Rune Wines Colibri Mourvedre.

2017 Rune Wines Colibri Syrah.

2017 Rune Wines Graciano.

2017 Rune Wines Pillsbury Mourvedre.

2017 Rune Wines Viognier.

2018 Rune Wines Viognier.

2018 Sand-Reckoner Grenache Rosé.

2017 Saeculum Cellars Chardonnay ML+.

2017 Saeculum Cellars Sangiovese.

2018 Southwest Wine Center Big Red.

2018 Southwest Wine Center Nopal.

2014 Winery 101 Chardonnay.

2015 Winery 101 Chenin Blanc.

2016 Winery 101 Cabernet Sauvignon George's Tribute.

2018 Winery 101 Grenache Blanc.

Bronze

2018 Alcantara Vineyard Malvasia Bianca.

2017 Alcantara Vineyard Syrah.

2017 Arizona Stronghold Vineyards Dala Cabernet Sauvignon.

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2018 Arizona Stronghold Vineyards Deep Sky Vineyard Grenache Clone 515.

2018 Bodega Pierce Chardonnay.

2018 Bodega Pierce Sauvignon Blanc.

2018 Burning Tree Cellars Colibri Rose.

2017 Burning Tree Cellars Hilltop Grenache.

2018 Burning Tree Cellars The Architect.

2017 Callaghan Vineyards Barrett's Rose'.

2016 Callaghan Vineyards Caitlin's.

2017 Callaghan Vineyards Caitlin's.

2017 Callaghan Vineyards Claire's.

2018 Callaghan Vineyards Dry Rose.

2017 Callaghan Vineyards Greg's.

2017 Callaghan Vineyards Rhumb Line Tannat.

2017 Callaghan Vineyards Tannat.

2017 Carlson Creek Vineyard Grenache Rose.

2018 Clear Creek Vineyard & Winery Rose.

2016 Deep Sky Vineyard Stellar.

2016 Dos Cabezas WineWorks Aguileon.

NV Dos Cabezas WineWorks Principrana.

2016 Dos Cabezas WineWorks Toscano.

2017 Flying Leap Vineyards & Distillery Big Red Blend.

2018 Flying Leap Vineyards & Distillery La Flor.

2017 Flying Leap Vineyards & Distillery Sangiovese Classico.

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2017 Golden Rule Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon.

2017 Heart Wood Cellars Heart.

2018 High Lonesome Vineyard PicPoul Blanc.

2018 Javelina Leap Vineyard & Winery Red Canyon Rose.

2018 Laramita Cellars Dos Compadres.

2018 Laramita Cellars Malvasia Bianca.

2017 Merkin Vineyards Tarzan Red.

2016 Mogollon Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon.

2018 Page Springs Cellars Colibri Grenache Pick 3.

2018 Page Springs Cellars Painted Lady Gewurztraminer.

2017 Pillsbury Wine Company Malvasia.

2017 Pillsbury Wine Company WildChild Red.

2018 Rune Wines Albariño.

2017 Rune Wines Grenache.

2016 Rune Wines Wild Syrah Private Reserve.

2015 Sand-Reckoner '7'.

2016 Sand-Reckoner 'x' red blend.

2018 Saeculum Cellars Viognier.

2018 Winery 101 Zintimate Blush.

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Judges'

Here are the judges from the competition and the wine each chose as their favorite.

Craig Dziadowicz, Hidden Track Bottle Shop: 2018 Winery 101 Grenache Blanc;
2017 Pillsbury Wine Company Grenache.

Tracy Dempsey, Tracy Dempsey Originals, ODV Wines: 2018 Bodega Pierce Rosé.

Audrey Everett, Fogo E Chao: 2018 Southwest Wine Center Carignan.

Sarah Foote, The Mission Kierland: 2017 Deep Sky Vineyard Nebula.

Ryan Gardner, Fox Restaurant Concepts: 2016 Chateau Tumbleweed Earth Cuckoo.

Christopher Gross, The Wrigley Mansion: 2017 Deep Sky Vineyard Nebula.

Ian Hidalgo, Action Wines: 2015 Caduceus Cellars Nagual de la Naga.

Joshua James, Clever Koi, The Fellow: 2017 Four Tails Vineyard Amigos.

Raini Keyser, Vinum 55 wine storage: 2017 High Lonesome Vineyard Tannat.

Kevin Lewis, Kai Restaurant at Sheraton Wild Horse Pass resort: 2018 Southwest Wine Center Viognier.

Jason Lothner, Stock & Stable: 2016 Caduceus Cellars Velvet Slippers Club Barbera.

Patrick Norton, The Phoenician: 2015 Caduceus Cellars Nagual de la Naga.

Emily Rieve, GenuWine Arizona: 2018 Southwest Wine Center Viognier.

Lindsey Schoenemann, GenuWine Arizona: 2018 Southwest Wine Center Carignan.

Jefferson Schroeder, Tres Tempe: 2016 Dos Cabezas WineWorks Toscano.

Jared Sowinski, The Phoenician: 2017 Four Tails Vineyard Amigos.

Katie Stephens, Beckett's Table: 2018 Southwest Wine Center Carignan; 2016
Caduceus Cellars Velvet Slippers Club Barbera.

Casey Thorne, Southern Rail: 2016 Garage-East Ray Rd.

Tai Ward, Southern Rail: 2015 Caduceus Cellars Sancha.

Jordan White, Vinum 55 wine storage: 2018 Bodega Pierce Rose.

<https://www.azcentral.com/story/travel/arizona/2019/11/16/best-arizona-wines-2019-azcentral-arizona-wine-competition-winners/4026026002/>