

Swedish-Spanish wine wins Gold Medal in the Concours Mondial

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Being Swedish we have to write about this of course. Rickard Enkvist is from Sweden but lives in the small village of Gaucin in the mountains above Malaga on the Spanish south coast. Some years back he bought a vineyard and became winemaker under the scorching Andalusian sun. This year two of his wines won



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Gold Medals in the Concours Mondial wine competition – one of the world's leading competitions for wine. Almost 7000 wines competed for medals this year (as we wrote in the last Brief) and around one third wins medals: Great Gold, Gold or Silver. In the press release from Enkvist he proudly announces that two of his wines, Suenos ("dreams") and Ultimo Suenos from his Cezar Vinedos y Bodega were awarded Gold Medals in the category red wines from Andalusia. That, however, is not quite correct, which gives us a reason to explain a bit more how the Concours works. (We should know, both Britt and Per were in the jury). All wines are tasted completely blind; there is no grouping of the wines presented to the judges. Similar wines are tasted together in groups but the judges do not know what the groups are. Thus, the judges taste the wines in a completely "neutral" context and have to judge the wines by their intrinsic qualities, not according to some pre-conceived idea of what a certain type of wine should be. Therefore, there is no such "category" as red Andalusian wines (which might be just as good, it could have been very easy to win a medal in that category...). In other words the Suenos wines won their medals in competition with other wines from all over the world, which in our opinion is a much greater achievement than being a Gold Medal winner in Andalusia (there were 12 Andalusian wines that were awarded medals, mostly sherries). So, congratulations to Mr Enkvist! Overall Spain came second in terms of the number of medals awarded (and first if you count only Great Gold Medals): 17 Great Golds, 136 Golds, and 225 Silver, with 1394 wines (and spirits) from Spain. The biggest medal winner was France: 14 Great Golds, 191 Golds, 401 Silvers, with 2277 competing products. More info www.enkvistwines.com and www.concoursmondial.com

ABOUT

Per and Britt, BKWine

We publish www.bkwine.com, a site about wine and wine travel, and the BKWine Brief, a free monthly newsletter on wine. We are members of the Circle of Wine Writers (UK), Federation International de Journalistes en Vin (FIJEV) and l'Association de la Press du Vin (France).

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CONCOURS MONDIAL DE BRUXELLES IN PALERMO

TEXT BRITT KARLSSON PHOTO PER KARLSSON, BKWINE.COM

ON THE 23-25 APRIL in Palermo, Italy , the annual Fine Wine World Championships, (Concours Mondial de Bruxelles) will be held for the 17th time. For the last few years the competition has left its homeland in Belgian to wander around Europe. This year it was Palermo in Sicily's turn to play host for the championships.

THE CMB HAS GROWN from a modest beginning in 1994 to become one of the world's most biggest wine competitions. In 1994 there were 861 wines competing, this year there were 6964 wines and spirits from 58 different countries, tasted by 300 experienced tasters from 40 countries. (Of these Britt and Per Karlsson, BKWine, were the only representatives from Sweden.

THE RESULTS of the world Championships will be published during the month of May. Check it out on www.concoursmondial.com

The jury consists mostly of wine journalists (65%) Though also of sommeliers, oenologists and buyers. During the three days this jury (divided into groups of 5+7 people) evaluate about 150 different wines each. That's roughly 50 wines a day. The tasting are done exclusively in

the forenoon. The tasting is done blind, the only thing we in the jury are told is the vintage. This means that the wines are tested completely impartially. Which of course is the only way to be fair way to the wines. So to make things a little bit easier for the tasters, the wines are tasted in series of 10-18. They are wines that have a certain common association (country, district, grape) which in and of itself doesn't

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necessarily mean that they have anything in common. The wine's appearance, fragrance, taste and overall impression is judged. The wine taster's personal taste should not steer the verdict, even though one cannot completely discount one's own personal taste. However one should not penalize an oak stored wine just because you don't like those kinds of wines. Regardless of your own preferences you have to be able to differentiate between a well balanced wine and an over "soaked" and heavy wine.

WHAT DOES a silver or gold medal from wine competition actually mean to the producer? In a world where the supply of wine is ever-increasing, where the majority of purchases are in self service stores, it becomes more and more important to be visible and well-known. A medal on the bottle means that the consumer feels secure in his/her purchase. A consumer that has no real idea what they have picked off of the shelves knows that the medal guarantees a certain standard of quality in the wines. Or he or she dares to try something new, just because the wine has been awarded a medal.

BEING A MEMBER of the international jury is unbelievably interesting and enlightening to be able to taste and judge a wine in this manner. Naturally one tries to guess the origin of the wine. Sometimes your right but we often get it wrong. We all know how influenced you can become by a label, so the fact that we have no idea where the wine comes from, means that sometimes even countries that we don't associate with quality wines. That might be that Mexico, Turkey, Georgia or Serbia all have a chance of winning a medal.

