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40th Annual Mendocino County Fair Wine Competition Awards
“Wines that stand out for clarity, focus and balance”

Friday, August 10th — Prestigious wine judges from Northern California gathered to judge the 40th Annual Mendocino County Fair Wine Competition, one of the oldest regional wine competitions in California. This year there were 247 wine entries from 46 wineries. An impressive number of medals were awarded: 23 double golds, 44 gold medals and 127 silver medals. This year’s distinguished judges were: Dan Berger, Barry Herbst, Larry Van Aalst, Mark Bowery, John Sverko, Mike Dunne, Chris Sawyer, Ziggy Eschliman, Laura Ness, Greg Richtarek, Debra Del Fiorentino, Deborah Parker Wong, Traci Dutton and Ellen Landis.

To commemorate the 40th year of the competition, the Mendocino County Fair Wine Competition is honoring Charlie Barra, one of the pioneers of Mendocino County winegrowing. The Best of Show White Wine each year will henceforth be known as the Charlie Barra Award. In 1945, when Charlie was still in high school he leased his first vineyard, and now the Barra family farms over 250 acres of vineyards in Mendocino County. Charlie, at 91 years young, still lights up when he hears that his grapes are producing double gold and Best of Class wines! Barra of Mendocino wines are made with estate grown grapes from CCOF (California Certified Organic Farmers) certified vineyards, and are featured at their Barra of Mendocino tasting room in Redwood Valley, CA.

Best of Show Awards, chosen from Best of Class winners are:

Best of Show Sparkling – Roederer Estate NV Anderson Valley Brut

Charlie Barra Award / Best of Show White – 2016 Navarro Vineyards Deep End Blend Gewürztraminer

Best of Show Rosé – 2017 Pennyroyal Farm Anderson Valley Rosé of Pinot Noir

John Parducci Award / Best of Show Red – 2016 Navarro Vineyards Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

Best of Show Dessert – 2013 Greenwood Ridge Vineyards Late Harvest Riesling.

Navarro Vineyards was the big winner at the wine competition with two Best of Show awards, three Best of Class, two double golds, eight golds and fourteen silver medals. Even more exceptional, Navarro entered 27 wines and each wine was awarded a medal!

Returning wine judge Mike Dunne had this to say about the competition: “Judges who have evaluated wines for the Mendocino County Fair Wine Competition often over the past couple of decades will agree that the field steadily has become more competitive and more representative of the county's ability to grow exquisite fruit. This year's flights were the strongest and most consistent yet, with a higher percentage of wines standing out for their clarity, focus and balance.”

"For my panel, trying to decide which of the excellent Pinot Gris/Grigio, other whites, Chardonnays, Gewürztraminers and dessert wines to send up to Best of Show award was difficult, not because we couldn't find excellence, but precisely because it was in such abundance! The flights were an utterly familiar joy: Mendocino tastes like nothing else. That's truly the hallmark of a region that understands its strengths and plays to them with pride, like an orchestra performing a favorite piece together entirely from memory, the music committed to heart," was the passionate response from wine writer Laura Ness.

Gold medal wines will be poured at the Mendocino County Fair in Boonville September 14-16, 2018.

A complete list of 2018 Mendocino County Fair Wine Competition Awards are available online at

<http://www.mendowine.com/events/wine-competition.php>.

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