



Lake County Winery Association

PO Box 1908
Middletown, California 95461
www.lakecountywineries.org
(707) 355.2762

CONTACT: Monica Rosenthal, (707) 355-2762
Written by: Susan Stout, freelance writer

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LAKE COUNTY CABERNETS CAPTURE TOP HONORS AT THE CHRONICLE COMPETITION

SAN FRANCISCO – Lake County cabernets were among the county’s varietals capturing several top honors at this year’s San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition, the Lake County Winery Association (LCWA) announced following the release of the 2012 contest’s results.

The annual San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition is touted as the “largest competition of American wines in the world.” The 2012 results were announced earlier this month following five days of tasting and evaluating more than 5,500 entries, a world record number, according to the event’s website.

“Lake County wines and wineries once again made a sensational showing at the SF Chronicle’s annual event. They truly stood out among the more than 5,500 entries,” said Monica Rosenthal, executive director of the Lake County Winery Association. “Our association members’ vintners can proudly say they are among the best. Every year they score top honors at this competition, helping to distinguish Lake County as a premier wine grape producing region. How fantastic it is to be recognized by the San Francisco competition’s professional judges who awarded numerous medals to Lake County varietals.”

Lake County's lead varietals, cabernet sauvignon and sauvignon blanc, did especially well, with gold and double gold awards going to county wineries.

Shannon Ridge Vineyards and Obsidian Ridge Vineyards each garnered double gold with their 2009 Cabernet Sauvignons.

"Lake County cabernets have evolved nicely over the past few years, and it is great to see the multitude of awards and recognition these high elevation cabernet wines are receiving from renown contests such as the SF Chronicle Wine Competition," said Shannon Ridge owner and Association chair Clay Shannon. "At Shannon Ridge, we take pride in producing wines that reflect the true character of this elevated region. Our winemaker Mike Wood has lots of experience with Lake County cabernet – when to pick it and how to ferment it. That makes all the difference in the world. We grow cabernet grapes at 2,100 – 2,400 feet using eco-friendly farming practices. We farm with passion. We make wines with true Lake County flavor, and we are stoked that our Shannon Ridge 2009 Cabernet received a double gold."

Also scoring double gold awards were Brassfield Estate for its 2009 "Eruption" red varietal blend, Chacewater Wine Co. for its 2008 Red Blend, Rosa d'Oro Vineyards for its 2009 Barbera, and Wildhurst Vineyards for its 2010 Reserve Chardonnay.

Among the gold award winners from Lake County were Chacewater Wine Co. (2009 Malbec), Gregory Graham Wines (2008 Cabernet Sauvignon), Non Typical Winery (2009 Non Typical Red Blend), Rosa d'Oro (2009 Primitivo), Shed Horn Cellars (2010 Chardonnay), Shooting Star (2010 Sauvignon Blanc), Six Sigma Ranch & Winery (2008 Tempranillo), Steele Wines (2009 Merlot), Wildhurst Vineyards (2009 Home Ranch Zinfandel), and Writers Block (2009 Tempranillo).

Lake County varietals accounted for several silver and bronze medals, with Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc taking more than the lion's share. Additional varietals winning several medals included Chardonnay, Viognier, Riesling, Petite Sirah, Malbec, Merlot, Zinfandel, and Tempranillo.

Many Lake County wineries were multiple winners, the competition results show. These included Brassfield Estate (five silvers in addition to its double gold), Chacewater Wine (three silver, two bronze, a gold and a double gold), Diamond Ridge Vineyards (three bronze and a silver), Gregory Graham (two silver and a gold), Guenoc (three silver and a bronze), Hawk and Horse Vineyard (a silver and two bronze), Langtry (two silver, two bronze), Lavender Blue (a silver and three bronze), Obsidian Ridge (two silver and its double gold), Robledo Winery (three silver and a bronze).

Rosa d'Oro took a silver in addition to its gold and double gold awards. Additional Lake County multi-medal winners were Shannon Ridge Vineyards (two silver, three bronze and the double gold), Shed Horn Cellars (two silver and a bronze in addition to its gold), Shooting Star (three silver, three bronze, and its gold), Six Sigma (two silver, three bronze, and its gold), Steele Wines (two silver, a bronze, and its gold), Wildhurst Vineyards (three silver in addition to its gold and double gold), and Writers Block (two silver, two bronze, and its gold).

“We congratulate our association members who had such a fine showing at the competition,” said Rosenthal. “We are thrilled to be able to boast about our fine wines and the Lake County wineries producing them.”

She pointed out that many wineries that use Lake County grapes to produce their wines outside of Lake County were also winners at the competition. This included a Best of Class award to Rock Wall Wine Co. Its 2010 Obsidian, made with grapes from the Red Hill AVA, was the overall winner in the “All Other red Varietals/Blends - \$20 and under” category. In addition,

Carruth Cellars' 2009 Malbec, a gold medal winner, was also produced from Lake County grapes, Jacuzzi Family Vineyards scored gold with its 2008 Primitivo., and Fore Family Vineyards received a gold for their 2008 Red Hills Cabernet. Approximately 19 silver and bronze awards were given to varietals by out-of-county wineries using Lake County winegrapes

For more information about the Lake County Winery Association, visit the association's website, www.lakecountywineries.org or contact Monica Rosenthal at monica@lakecountywineries.org.

Lake County's own wine competition, now in its fourth year, is in the planning stages, said Rosenthal. "Watch for the 2012 springtime 'call to action' to enter wines in this competition located in California's high elevation wine region. This competition is open to all producers of wines made from Lake County fruit." For more information, call Rosenthal at 707-355-2762.

Winning entries in each category of the San Francisco Chronicle competition can be found on the website, www.winejudging.com. In addition, tickets for the public tasting portion of the event may be purchased online. The public's opportunity to taste entries from the competition is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 18, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., at the Fort Mason Center in San Francisco. Tickets are \$65 per person in advance and \$80 per person at the door.

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