



THE JEFFERSON CUP INVITATIONAL WINE COMPETITION

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The Jefferson Cup Invitational
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Kansas City, Missouri – The Jefferson Cup Invitational has celebrated its fifteenth year as the only competition that honors the best of the best among wineries from all of America’s wine regions. Each year we select great wines from across America; the 2014 competition included wines from twenty-five states. At the end of the second day of this year's tasting, November 21, 2014 wines from FOURTEEN different states had captured top honors. Just as the event’s namesake would have it, democracy reigned at this year’s Jefferson Cup Wine Competition.

The two-day competition culminated with the awarding of thirty-eight Jefferson Cup Awards. Jefferson Cups were awarded to wines made from both vinifera vines (a European species responsible for most famous wines such as Chardonnay and Cabernet) and non-vinifera vines, which flourish in the more extreme climates in the center portion of the U.S.

These thirty-eight prestigious Jefferson Cups, similar to Sweepstakes Awards at other competitions, were awarded to twelve white wines, twenty red wines and six dessert wines. “While many competitions insist upon selecting a pre-ordained number of sweepstakes winners, our judges are allowed to find the top wines, whether there are only one, two or three, or even NO winners in some categories, as has happened in previous years,” says Jefferson Cup Invitational founder Doug Frost. “Indeed this year, there was no rose’ or sparkling winners this year, though a number of roses and sparklers won awards. Best of all, there were once again great examples of wine, both from vinifera and non-vinifera grapes.” Together with fifty-seven other wines nominated for (but not awarded) the Jefferson Cup, these thirty-eight wines represent some of the most compelling wines made in America.

Although many expect California to dominate the awards, Jefferson Cups were won by thirteen other states: Colorado, Arizona, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Texas and Washington State. Both Missouri and Michigan put California’s successes (six Cups) by winning eight Cups and five Cups respectively. Both Missouri’s St. James Winery and St. Julian Winery in Michigan won an astounding *three* Cups. Two Cup winners this year included Michael David Winery (California), Shady Lane Cellars (Michigan), Black Mesa Winery (New Mexico) and Walla Walla Vintners (Washington).

Many people have begun to call the Jefferson Cup Invitational, the “Olympics” of wine competitions. This competition is not open to every winery willing to submit an entrance fee. Rather we select the best of the best, culled from tastings and competitions in America throughout 2014. The Jefferson Cup Invitational was founded in 1999 in honor of Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson fathered our constitution, helped champion the international concept of human rights and was a seminal figure in America’s cultural, culinary (including wine) and agricultural history.

About the Jefferson Cup Invitational

The Fifteenth Annual Jefferson Cup Invitational took place on November 20 and 21, 2014 in Kansas City, Missouri. The Jefferson Cup is a different sort of wine competition, in that it is an invitational in which over seven hundred wines are pre-selected which exemplify top viticulture and winemaking throughout America.

This year, out of over seven hundred forty chosen wines, the judges selected just over three hundred twenty wines to receive the “Medals of American Merit”, which celebrates wines exemplary of their regions and varieties, and is comparable to a Silver Medal at most competitions. Next the judges chose one hundred ninety wines (there was no pre-ordained number or percentage) that they believed were truly great wines, roughly equivalent to Gold Medals in other competitions. Those will receive medallions announcing them as “Medals of American Excellence”.

This year, ninety-five wines were selected as Jefferson Cup nominees; these wines were nominated by the six judging committees to be considered for Jefferson Cups. Out of those ninety-six honored wines, the judges collectively picked thirty-eight wines to be awarded the Jefferson Cup. By selecting both vinifera and non-vinifera wines for the Jefferson Cup each year, the hope is to respect the diversity of American viticulture and Jefferson's own acceptance of native varieties and hybrids. Jefferson fathered our constitution, helped champion the international concept of human rights and was a seminal figure in America's cultural, culinary (including wine) and agricultural history.

“In most other competitions there is ‘open’ seating,” says Frost, ”and California represents 90% of the entries. As a result it usually captures 90% of the honors,” he said. “What we are doing is following Mr. Jefferson's example and allowing every quality wine-producing region in America a place at our table. Each year we select great wines from across America; the 2014 competition included wines from twenty-five states.”

Following the Jefferson Cup competition, the remaining wines are donated for an annual event that benefits children and adults in need. This year the Jefferson Cup raised more than \$90,000 for Angel Flight Central. We hope that these events reflect well upon the great heritage of Thomas Jefferson.

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The 2014 JEFFERSON CUP winners are:

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For White Vinifera Wine:

Dos Cabezas WineWorks El Campo Blanco Pronghorn 2012 Arizona
King Estate Signature Pinot Gris 2013 Oregon
Shady Lane Cellars Estate Semi-Dry Riesling 2013 Leelanau Peninsula, MI
Shady Lane Cellars Estate Dry Riesling 2013 Leelanau Peninsula, MI
St. Julian Winery Reserve Riesling 2013 Lake Michigan Shore
Chateau LaFayette Reneau Semi-Dry Riesling 2012 Finger Lakes
Fox Run Vineyards Riesling 12 Hanging Delta Vineyard 2011 Finger Lakes
Trefethen Family Vineyards Chardonnay 2013 Oak Knoll District

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For White Non-Vinifera Wine:

St. James Winery Friendship School White nv Ozark Highlands
St. James Winery Semi-Dry Vignoles 2013 Ozark Highlands
Jowler Creek Vineyard & Winery Vignoles 2013 Platte County
Miletta Vista Winery Brianna nv Nebraska

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For Red Vinifera Wine:

Black Mesa Winery Cabernet Sauvignon 2011 New Mexico
Bookcliff Vineyards Malbec 2013 Colorado
Brian Carter Cellars Solesce 2009 Columbia Valley
Carol Shelton Wines Zinfandel Rocky Reserve Florence Vineyard 2011 Rockpile
DeLille Cellars Doyenne Signature Syrah 2011 Red Mountain
Dry Creek Vineyard Meritage 2010 Sonoma County
Michael David Winery Rapture 2012 Lodi
Michael David Winery Earthquake Zinfandel 2012 Lodi
Pedernales Cellars Tempranillo Reserve 2012 Texas
St. Julian Winery Pinot Noir Braganini Reserve 2013 Michigan
Troublemaker Blend 8 nv Central Coast
Walla Walla Vintners Cabernet Franc 2012 Columbia Valley
Walla Walla Vintners Estate Syrah 2011 Walla Walla Valley
The Winery at Holy Cross Abbey Merlot Reserve 2012 Colorado

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For Red Non-Vinifera Wine:

Baltimore Bend Vineyard Arrowhead Red nv American
Blue Sky Vineyard Chambourcin Reserve 2011 Shawnee Hills
Montelle Winery Chambourcin 2013 Missouri
Pirtle Winery Weston Bend Red nv Missouri
St. James Winery Estate Norton 2012 Ozark Highlands
Stone Hill Winery Chambourcin 2012 Missouri

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For Dessert Wine:

Black Mesa Winery Cosecha Ultima Late Harvest nv New Mexico
Dakota Sun Gardens Haskap Berry Wine nv North Dakota
Debonne Vineyards Vidal Blanc Ice Wine 2013 Grand River Valley
Grand River Cellars Vidal Blanc Ice Wine 2013 Grand River Valley
Hunt Country Vineyards Vidal Blanc Ice Wine 2013 Finger Lakes
St. Julian Winery Solera Cream Sherry nv Michigan

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