

Wines of the Year 2020: red and rosé wines

From delicious Pinot Noir and great Cabernet to an exciting Canadian Merlot blend and rosé from Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, here is a mouth-watering list of styles to seek out from our Wines of the Year tasting.



How the Red and Rosé Wines of the Year 2020 were chosen

Every year we ask Decanter World Wine Awards Regional Chairs, key contributors and staff to nominate the wines that most impressed them in the previous 12 months across three categories:

- Classic (a premium, textbook wine style);
- Offbeat (unusual grape, winemaking method, region or unearthed gem);
- Value (£25 or under).

Following the nominations, we ask an expert tasting panel to score them and offer an objective view on the line-up put forward by their various peers. This year's panel members were Andy Howard MW, Beth Willard and Ronan Sayburn MS.

The reds truly piqued the judges' excitement this year.

'It was fascinating to see what our fellow experts had chosen,' said Ronan Sayburn MS.

'Though it was often quite difficult to judge – like when you taste your first ever Moschomavro (see below), that clearly someone thinks is great, and probably is, but you're not trying it in context with a bunch of other Moschomavros.'

The wines falling in the classic category shone as benchmark examples.

Sayburn singled out the Pinot Noirs, including a 'delicious, characterful' Sancerre and 'a fantastic IGP Pinot from the Loire', adding of the latter, 'It will be interesting to know the price of that.'

Willard was particularly impressed by the Cabernets. 'I really enjoyed the different expressions from around the world, but the classic regions shone through,' she said, citing 'Western Australia's Margaret River and Rutherford in Napa'.

She added, 'I was also really excited by the Canadian Merlot blend – an outstanding red with great elegance and intensity.'

For Andy Howard MW, it was all about Syrah, and especially the wine from St-Joseph: 'This stood out for me – I always think it's not as great as Côte-Rôtie or Hermitage, but this example was fantastic.'

Yet the wine of the tasting was an Amarone. 'It was an outstanding example of the genre,' said Howard. 'Its age, depth, complexity of flavour and alcohol – everything was beautifully balanced.'

All three judges were keen to point out to readers that, at the time of tasting, they were not told the prices of the wines or the categories for which the bottles had been nominated. Scores were, therefore, based purely on quality.

'For example,' said Howard, 'there was an IGP Puy de Dôme red and a Vin de France Grenache that I suspect are not particularly expensive but were just really delicious wines to drink.'

'Across the board, whether you are at the exotic end of Amarones, SuperTuscans and Napa Cabernets or down at that IGP level, this tasting showed the diversity of great wines out there.'

Decanter's Red & Rosé Wines of the Year 2020



Passopisciaro, Contrada Rampante, Terre Siciliane, 2014

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Rose petal and sour cherry, very pretty and vibrant nose. Great balance between fruit and acidity with ripeness balanced by freshness on the palate.

Points 93

(...)