



THE JEFFERSON CUP INVITATIONAL WINE COMPETITION

Doug Frost MS, MW
The Jefferson Cup Invitational
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Kansas City, Missouri – The Jefferson Cup Invitational has celebrated its twelfth 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 2011 competition included wines from twenty-two states. At the end of the second day of this year's tasting, November 18th, wines from eleven different states had captured top honors. Just as the event's namesake would have it, democracy reigned at this year's Jefferson Cup Invitational Wine Competition.

The two-day competition culminated with the awarding of twenty-two Jefferson Cup Awards. Jefferson Cups were awarded to wines made from both vinifera vines (a European species responsible for 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 twenty-two prestigious Jefferson Cups were awarded this year to two sparkling wines, seven white wines, ten red wines and three 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 happened this year," says Jefferson Cup Invitational founder Doug Frost. "Indeed this year, there was no rose' or red hybrid wine winner, though a number of those wines won awards. Best of all, there were once again great examples of wine, both from vinifera and non-vinifera grapes." Together with almost fifty other wines nominated for (but not awarded) the Jefferson Cup, these twenty-two wines represent some of the most compelling wines made in America.

This year's Jefferson Cup competition saw some very notable developments and successes. Three wineries, Michael-David (California), Page Springs (Arizona) and Hazlitt's 1852 Vineyards (New York) won TWO Jefferson Cups each. And although many expect California to dominate the awards, Jefferson Cups were won by ten other states: Ohio, Missouri, Georgia, Virginia, Colorado, Texas, Washington and New York each won Jefferson Cups for their wineries. Arizona won a remarkable three Jefferson Cups, and Colorado joined in, with Canyon Wind's 2009 Petit Verdot out-dueling reds from Washington, California and other states. New York State matched California, winning four Jefferson Cups to California's four Cups.

For the first time, the West Coast did not dominate the competition awards. The only Cabernet winner was not from Napa Valley but from the consistently worthy Walla Walla Vintners in Washington. Fascinatingly, two California Pinot Noirs were Jefferson Cup winners, besting the Oregon entries. Lodi-based Michael-David Winery won two Jefferson Cups and their Syrah 6th Sense, has now won Jefferson Cups two years running. This year's victories are yet another example of success in an astounding seven year string of victories for that winery.

"In the past years, the Jefferson Cup seems to have focused upon Syrah or Cabernet," says Frost, "But this year, there was greater diversity of wines, though vinifera grapes dominated among the red wines. I am very pleased with the way the Jefferson Cup Invitational competition has developed," Mr. Frost said. "We had a representation of the best of what every quality wine producing region in the country is offering right now, including improved representation from Washington, Michigan, Virginia and Texas as well as some standout wines from California, New York and Oregon. Colorado and Ohio wines again rose to the top of the pack this year, but this was really New York State's big year for medals, based upon their fantastic white wines and some great dessert wines. And New York based Chateau Lafayette Reneau has won Cups for two years running.

The Jefferson Cup Invitational is a twelve-year-old competition founded by Doug Frost, one of only three individuals in the world to have achieved the titles of Master Sommelier and Master of Wine. "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. "I can now foresee a time when that will not happen. What we are doing is following Mr. Jefferson's example and allowing every quality wine-producing region in America a place at our table. We look forward to continuing to grow our competition as the rest of the country continues to grow the quality of their products."

"While many may know him from his well-chronicled political role, most Americans have no idea just how influential Jefferson was in the way we eat and drink and live today", Mr. Frost said. "To call Mr. Jefferson ahead of his time where food and wine are concerned is the ultimate understatement," Mr. Frost said. "Mr. Jefferson was growing grapes that did not really come into vogue in this country until 20 years ago!"

Best of all, this year's Jefferson Cup coincided with our seventh annual fundraiser for AngelFlight Central, a great charity that gives support for private pilots offering travel to people in medical emergencies. The Jefferson Cup fundraisers raised more than \$90,000 for Angel Flight this year.

About the Jefferson Cup Invitational

The Twelfth Annual Jefferson Cup Invitational took place on November 18 and November 19, 2011 in Kansas City, Missouri. The Jefferson Cup is a different sort of wine competition, in that it is an invitational in which over six hundred wines are pre-selected which exemplify viticulture and winemaking in America.

The Jefferson Cup Invitational does not award golds, silvers and the like. Rather, the invited wines have all proven their excellence in competitions and tastings throughout the last year. We seek to publicize our belief that these are wines that are extremely deserving of the nation's attention.

This year, out of over six hundred thirty chosen wines, the judges selected just under three hundred wines to receive the "Medals of American Merit", which respects wines exemplary of their regions and varieties, and is comparable to a Silver Medal at most competitions. Next the judges chose one hundred fifty-two 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, seventy wines were selected as Jefferson Cup nominees; these wines were nominated by the five judging committees to be considered for Jefferson Cups. Out of those seventy honored wines, the judges collectively picked twenty-two 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.

This year's judges included the following industry luminaries: Wayne Belding MS (past Chairman of the Court of Master Sommeliers), Laura dePasquale MS (one of the world's few female Master Sommeliers), Ellen Landis (proprietor of Landis Shores Resort at California's Half Moon Bay and long time California wine competition judge), Bob Foster (writer, *The California Grapevine*), Bob Bath MS (a Napa Valley based consultant and teacher), Doug Frost MS, MW (author and consultant), Robert Noecker (a Midwestern wholesaler and thirty year veteran of the wine industry), Jeff Miller (a Kansas distributor of two and a half decades experience), Dennis Schaefer (wine columnist for the Santa Barbara News-Press) and Joyce Angelos (a Missouri wholesaler and industry veteran of twenty-five years).

The Jefferson Cup is partially supported by the Missouri Grape and Wine Program, an extension of the Department of Agriculture, State of Missouri.

Doug Frost MS, MW

Director, Jefferson Cup Invitational

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The 2011 JEFFERSON CUP winners are:

For Sparkling Wine:

Gloria Ferrer Royal Cuvee 2004 Carneros
Bel Lago Brillante nv Leelenau Peninsula

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For White Vinifera Wine:

Chateau Lafayette Reneau Dry Riesling 2010 Finger Lakes
Tiger Mountain Vineyards Petit Manseng 2010 Georgia
Jefferson Vineyards Viognier 2010 Monticello, Virginia

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For White Non-Vinifera Wine:

Augusta Seyval Blanc 2010 Missouri
Stonehaus Strother Ridge Vignoles 2009 Missouri
Hazlitt's 1852 Vineyards White Cat nv Finger Lakes
Hazlitt's 1852 Vineyards White Stag nv Finger Lakes

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For Red Vinifera Wine:

Davis Bynum Pinot Noir 2010 Russian River Valley
Wente Vineyards Pinot Noir Reliz Creek 2008 Arroyo Seco
Page Springs Mourvedre Colibri Vineyards 2010 Cochise County, Arizona
Michael David 6th Sense Syrah 2009 Lodi
Canyon Wind Petit Verdot 2009 Grand Valley
Red Caboose Tempranillo-Cabernet Sauvignon 2008 Texas
Page Springs El Serrano 2010 Cochise County, Arizona
Walla Walla Vintners Cabernet Sauvignon 2008 Walla Walla Valley
Michael David Petite Petit 2009 Lodi

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For Dessert Wine:

Swedish Hill Winery Vignoles Late Harvest 2010 Finger Lakes
Chalet Debonne Vineyard Vidal Ice Wine Express 2010 Grand River Valley
Crown Valley Norton Fine Old Vintage Museum Collection 2004 Missouri

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And a **Special Honorary Jefferson Cup** is awarded to
My Three Sons Norton 2008 Missouri

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