

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**2016 OVIS Cabernet Franc From Shannon Ridge Family Wines, Lake County,  
Takes Best of Show at 2019 Harvest Challenge**

Santa Rosa, Calif., —December 4, 2019— It was a Lake County wine atop the podium at this year's 2019 Harvest Challenge, an annual judging of wines grouped according to American Viticulture Area (AVA). The 2016 OVIS Cabernet Franc was voted Best of Show, after taking Best of Lake County and Best Red of Show, narrowly beating out the 2017 St. Anne's Crossing 2017 Tripi Zinfandel from Russian River in close voting for Best Red. The Zin took Best of Russian River Valley AVA.

Taking Best of Show Sparkling was the NV Breathless Brut, which also garnered the coveted Best of Sonoma County award. Snagging honors for Best Dessert of Show was a Cream Sherry made from Niagara grapes by San Sebastian Wine Company.

Honors for Best White Wine went to the 2018 Hive & Honey Riesling from Monterey, made by Scheid Family Wines, which also took Best of Monterey AVA honors. A 2018 Lodi Pinotage Rosé from Intercoastal took Best Rosé, and Best Of Lodi AVA.

The Harvest Challenge, owned and operated by Wine Competition Management & Productions, is judged by leading wine industry professionals from across the country who evaluate and rank wines based on terroir. At the Harvest Challenge, judges taste wines with other wines of the same appellation to determine which wines rise above.

A goal of Harvest Challenge is to learn how soil and climate contribute to the excellence and distinctiveness of wines. Thus, with cross-regional competition removed, the inherent quality of wines can often be seen without the influences that sometimes eclipse even a wine of very high quality.

This year's competition, which took place in Santa Rosa on November 12 and 13, was delayed by a week, due to the Kincade Fire and the impact of PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoffs, which shuttered businesses throughout Sonoma, Mendocino and Lake Counties, forcing the largest evacuation Sonoma county has ever seen. The Santa Rosa Fairgrounds where the competition is held, served as a staging ground for many evacuees, including those with large animals forced to flee the impacted areas.

"While it was a minor inconvenience for us to have our offices closed and the competition delayed," said chief judge and competition owner, Debra Del Fiorentino, "we are grateful there was no loss of life. Our hearts go out to Wilson Artisan Wineries on the loss of Soda Rock Winery, where we have held the Experience Rosé Competition for the past two years. But, we are #Sonoma Strong and we'll overcome this challenge."

Over 1k entries were received this year, despite the closure of the competition's headquarters and shipping facility due to the impact of the PSPS enacted by PG&E.

"The specialized nature of this competition is what attracts our judges, and the wines submitted. It's always interesting to see the outcome where the smallest nuance can influence how a judge will rate a wine against another in a shared terroir," says Debra Del Fiorentino. "Over the course of these competitions, judges have learned to recognize when a wine's region is - and is not- a factor of wine quality."

This year, Del Fiorentino says that 26% of the medals awarded were Golds, with 84 of them being Double Gold, a sure sign that the judges found a lot to appreciate in this year's field.

### **BEST OF AVA WINNERS**

Scribner Bend Vineyards 2018 Viognier, Best of Clarksburg AVA

Goldschmidt Vineyards 2018 "Fidelity," Best of Class; Best of Alexander Valley AVA

Pennyroyal Farm 2016 Pinot Noir, Best of Class; Best of Anderson Valley AVA

Gray Monk Estate Winery 2018 Siegerrebe, Best of Class; Best of British Columbia AVA

Frank Family Vineyards 2017 Carneros Pinot Noir, Best of Class; Best of Carneros AVA

Pegasus Estate Winery 2016 Quadrille Red Blend, Best of Class; Best of Central Coast AVA

Tsillan Cellars Winery 2017 Malbec, Best of Class; Best of Columbia Valley AVA

Miro Cellars 2018 Petite Sirah, Best of Class; Best of Dry Creek Valley AVA

Thirsty Owl Wine Company 2018 Diamond Best of Class; Best of Finger Lakes AVA

Trecini Winery 2015 Barbera, Best of Class; Best of Italy

Garré Vineyard and Winery 2016 "Profound Secret" Bordeaux Blend, Best of Class; Best of Livermore Valley AVA

Frey Vineyards Organic 2018 Pinot Noir, Best of Class; Best of Mendocino County AVA

Fortunati Vineyards 2017 Viognier, Best of Class; Best of Napa County AVA

Merriam Vineyards 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon, Gloeckner-Turner Ranch, Best of Class; Best of Rockpile AVA

St. Anne's Crossing 2017 Tripi Zinfandel, Best of Class; Best of Russian River Valley AVA

Perrucci Family Vineyard 2015 Merlot, Regan Vineyard, Best of Class; Best of Santa Cruz Mountains AVA

Scheid Family Wines 2018 Hive & Honey Gewurztraminer, Best of Class; Best of Show; Best White; Best of Monterey County AVA

North Canyon Cider Company 2019 Original Dry, Best of Class; Best of Sierra Foothills AVA

Nicholson Ranch 2017 Cuvée Natalie Chardonnay, Best of Class; Best of Sonoma Coast AVA

St. Anne's Crossing 2017 Shumahi Primitivo, Best of Class; Best of Sonoma Valley AVA

Penrose Hill Alazules 2018 Airen, Best of Class; Best of Spain

Poggio Leano Winery and Vineyards 2017 Montepulciano, Best of Class; Best of Temecula Valley AVA

Casanel Vineyards & Winery 2018 Chardonnay, Best of Class; Best of Virginia AVA

Berryessa Gap Vineyards 2017 Petite Sirah, Best of Class; Best of Yolo County

Shannon Ridge Family of Wines 2016 OVIS Cabernet Franc, Best of Class; Best Red; Best of Show, Best of Lake County AVA

Intercoastal Vineyards 2018 Rosé of Pinotage, Best of Class; Best Rosé; Best of Lodi AVA

Breathless Wines NV Brut, Best of Class; Best Sparkling, Best of Sonoma County AVA

Vina Robles Vineyards & Winery 2017 Cabernet Sauvignon, Best of Paso Robles AVA

2Hawk Vineyard & Winery 2017 Viognier, Best of Rogue Valley AVA

For this year's Harvest Challenge, the event producer has partnered with specialty printer First in Print for quality point-of-sale materials with discounted pricing for winners. See <https://www.winecompetitions.com/harvest-challenge> for details.

Winners will be listed on winecompetitions.com. An overview article will also appear online at [www.spiritedbiz.com](http://www.spiritedbiz.com) and in a future issue of award-winning *Spirited* magazine, a nationally distributed adult beverage trade publication.

**About Wine Competitions Management & Production (WCMP)**

This organization owns and operates a variety of competitions including West Coast Wine Competition, International Eastern Wine Competition, East Meets West, International Women's Wine Competition, Harvest Challenge, the Craft Distillers Spirits Competition, Press Democrat North Coast Wine Challenge, and Experience Rosé. WCMP also manages the California Cider Competition and the Mendocino Apple Show International Cider Competition.

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