



China brings home Gold at International Wine Challenge

Chinese wines gained four Gold medals, 17 Silvers and 37 bronzes at this year's International Wine Challenge (IWC), the world's most rigorously judged wine competition.

The past decade has seen a dramatic increase in both quantity and quality levels.

After two weeks of blind-tasting in London, four Chinese Gold winners emerged, all scoring 95/100:

- **Domaine Franco-Chinois Reserve Red Blend 2014**
 - This "elegant, classic Bordeaux-style blend" from the Northern Hebei province is more than 50% Merlot, with Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon completing the blend
- **China Great Wall Five Star Cabernet Sauvignon 2016**
 - The COFCO owned wine, also from the Hebei province, was described as showcasing "pure Cabernet character"
- **Jade Vineyard Hyacinth Red 2017**
 - IWC judges were impressed with this blend's "generous expression" of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot
- **Chateau Zhongfei Zunxiang Cabernet Sauvignon 2016**
 - IWC judges described this great example of a Cabernet Sauvignon as "fragrant, with leafy blackcurrant aromas. Firm tannins on the palate but enlivened by fresh acidity and leafy black fruit"

Given the unprecedented quality of the entries, the IWC panel created a Chinese Red Trophy for the first time, with the top gong going to **China Great Wall Five Star Cabernet Sauvignon 2016**.

IWC co-chair Oz Clarke, who has been watching the Chinese wine market for the past 33 years, commented: "I'll tell you about those old styles if you want. But I'd much rather tell you about the modern wines which leap in quality every year, and which are displaying distinct regional characteristics, even though so many vines are still fresh in the ground. If China commits to a project, expect exciting results. And China has definitely committed to the project of making great wine. We ain't seen nothing yet!"

China won its first IWC medal in 2007, and its first Gold a decade later in 2017.

Chris Ashton, IWC event director, said: "All of the wines go through a rigorous process of judging. All are tasted blind over a two-week period, so this is a very impressive result. It shows the quality is improving by leaps and bounds. It's exciting to see."

NOTES TO EDITORS:

For interviews or photography, please contact beth.terry@thisisphispps.com

The International Wine Challenge

In its 36th year, the International Wine Challenge is accepted as the world's finest and most meticulously judged competition. The IWC assesses every wine 'blind' and judges each for its faithfulness to style, region and vintage. Each medal-winning wine is tasted on at least three separate occasions by a minimum of 12 different judges including Masters of Wine. Awards include medals (Gold, Silver, Bronze) and Commended awards. The IWC is committed to helping consumers discover great wine, and the medals displayed on winning bottles offer a trusted guarantee of quality.

For more information on the IWC and full results, please contact the IWC team at Phipps
iwc@thisishipps.com : +44 (0) 20 7759 7400 : 17 Exeter Street, London, WC2E 7DU, UK