

El Dorado County wineries score big at state fair

By Pooch Pucilowski

The California State Fair Wine Competition has been judging California wines since 1854.

The 2011 competition should go down as a proud moment for all the wineries in the Sierra Foothills Appellation – more important, for the wineries in El Dorado wine country.

An interesting observation that should bring a sense of pride to every Sierra Foothill winery is Napa had 23 red wines (Golds and Double Golds) being tasted for Best of Region. Sonoma had 19 reds, South Central Coast had 12 reds, and California appellation had 25 reds. Sierra Foothills had 51 Gold and Double Gold red wines. A most incredible happenstance.

Peter Gamble, winemaker and consultant from Ontario, Canada, stated, “In over 25 years of my judging wines from around the world, the greatest single flight of wines I’ve ever had was at this year’s California State Fair; over 30 of 50 wines presented in the regional finals were at the ‘spectacular’ level. Amazing!”

Among those receiving top honors was Windwalker Vineyard with a Double Gold for their 2008 Primitivo “Shady Lady” 98. Windwalker was also awarded Best of Show – Red; Best of California; Best of Region Red Sierra Foothills Appellation and Best of Class Sierra Foothills Appellation. Ranked third Best Winery in California, they also took home three Gold, five Silver and two Bronze medals.

Auriga Wine Cellars took home three Gold for their 2008 Merlot, 2009 Sangiovese and 2009 Barbera. Boeger Winery

received one Gold for their 2008 Migliore; Crystal Basin Cellars received Gold for their 2008 Gren, Syr. Mourv; 2 Golds for Gold Hill Vineyard for their 2009 Chardonnay – Best of Class and 2007 Petite Syrah; Lewis Grace Patriot Gold for their 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon and Perry Creek received a Gold for their 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon.

El Dorado Winery Association members receiving Silver and Bronze Medals:

Silver Medals

- * Auriga Wine Cellars – 2008 Shiraz; 2007 Zinfandel
- * Boeger Winery – 2009 Sauvignon Blanc, 2008 Barbera, 2008 Zinfandel
- * Busby Cellars – 2008 Zinfandel
- * Charles B. Mitchell Vineyard – 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon, 2008 CabSauv, CFranc, Mer
- * Crystal Basin Cellars – 2008 CFranc, Mer, CabSav, PVer, 2008 Cabernet Franc, 2008 Syrah
- * David Girard Vineyards – 2009 Grenache, 2009 Roussanne, 2009 Sur, Gren, Cunoise,
- * Gold Hill Vineyard – 2007 Cabernet Franc, 2007 Barbera, 2009 Viognier, 2007 CabSav, CFranc, Mer
- * Holly's Hill – 2009 Mourvedre, 2009 Roussanne, Viog, Grenach, 2009 Grenach Noir
- * Latcham Vineyards – 2008 Barbera
- * Lava Cap Winery – 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon, 2008 Petite Sirah, 2008 Zinfandel
- * Lewis Grace Patriot – 2006 Syrah, 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon, 2009 Viognier, 2006 Tempranillo

- * Madrona Vineyards – 2008 Cabernet Franc, 2010 Riesling, 2009 Viog, Mars, Roussanne, 2008 Ruby Port
- * Mount Aukum Winery – 2007 Sang, CabSav, CFranc
- * Oakstone – 2009 Barbera, 2010 Sauvignon Blanc, 2008 Meritage, NV Red Wine, 2008 Sangiovese, 2008 Zinfandel, 2010 Verdelho
- * Perry Creek Winery – 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon, 2009 Chardonnay, 2008 Zinfandel
- * Sierra Oaks Estates – 2008 Petite Sirah
- * Sierra Vista Vineyard – 2008 Syrah, 2010 Viognier
- * Windwalker Vineyard – 2008 Zinfandel, NV Blended Red Wine, 2007 Zinfandel.

Bronze Medals

- * Boeger Winery – 2006 Meritage, NV Red Wine, 2007 Sangiovese, 2007 Zinfandel
- * Busby Cellars – NV CabSav, CFranc, Mer, Ma
- Charles B. Mitchell Vineyard – 2007 Merlot, 2008 Merlot
- * Crystal Basin Cellars – 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon
- * Gold Hill Vineyard – 2007 Merlot
- Holly's Hill Vineyards – 2009 Mourv, Syr, Gren, Counois
- * Jodar – 2006 CFranc, Mer, Cabsav, 2007 Zinfandel
- * Latcham Vineyards – 2008 Zinfandel
- * Lava Cap – 2008 Zinfandel, 2008 Bronze
- * Madrona Vineyards – 2008 Zinfandel, 2007 Merlot, 2009 Zinfandel,

* Oakstone – 2008 Merlot, 2010 Pinot Grigio, 2010 Pinot Grigio, 2008 Primitivo

* Perry Creek Winery – 2009 Barbera, 2008 Syrah, 2008 Petite Sirah, 2008 Zinfandel

* Sierra Oaks – NV Zin, Barb, NV Red Wine

* Sierra Vista Vineyard & Winery – 2010 Sauvignon Blanc, 2009 Syr, Gren, Mourv, Cins

* Windwalker Vineyard – 2007 Petite Sirah, 2006 CabSav Mer, CFranc, Ma, 2009 Sauvignon Blanc.

Pooch Pucilowski is chief judge and consultant to the California State Fair Commercial Wine Competition.