

## CSWWC 2021: Covid-struck but medal-strewn

After a dramatic start, which forced the competition's founder Tom Stevenson to withdraw, it was the most decorated edition so far, reports Essi Avellan MW

For the eighth year of the Champagne and Sparkling Wine World Championships (CSWWC), the two intense weeks of judging took place in late September under sunny autumn skies. The competition was held at the beautiful Champneys Eastwell Manor Hotel & Health Spa in Kent, England, where the facilities were simply perfect from a judge's point of view. The tasting room was right next to the hotel entrance, and the wonderful Champneys gym, outdoor pool, and spa encouraged a healthy day routine. It felt almost too good to be true.

And so it turned out to be, as our competition founder and chairman Tom Stevenson fell ill with Covid during our first week of judging, despite his and the whole team's double-vaccination status. It felt devastating for many reasons, the most important being concern over the coming severity of his (and later his wife

Pat's) illness. We also felt sorry for him, knowing how hard he works on the competition all year round with Rachel Davey and Eva Callaghan in the back office and how much he enjoys the whole CSWWC experience with the team.

To make things worse, we were low on judges to begin with. Our reserve judge Simon Stockton couldn't finally join us due to family illness, so we asked Roger Jones to fill his spot for part of the time. George (György) Márkus was back in the assembly as one of the three judges after one year out due to Covid restrictions. With Tom gone, George and I both felt that we needed reinforcement in case one of us also got the bug. Tom had left me in charge, and with his consent I called Nick Baker, Champagne and sparkling-wine merchant at The Finest Bubble, with whom I have tasted hundreds, if not thousands, of sparkling wines. Luckily,

Nick was willing to reschedule his whole week of work at a couple of hours' notice and join George and me for an intense week of judging.

We felt stressed at first, but day by day things started to look better. Neither Tom's nor Pat's condition became critical, everybody else kept testing negative, and the judging advanced swimmingly. The Sensible Wine Services team—Donald MacKenzie and James Davies (aided very capably by our newest CSWWC team member Paul Schofield)—once again did a magnificent job juggling thousands of bottles accurately and speedily, allowing us to keep up our preferred pace of tasting.

While Harriet Wright and Roger Jones were in charge of score-keeping, we could once again trust Orsi Szentkiralyi's palate for a final reassurance that all faulty or





inconsistent bottles were spotted. As the quality controller, she opens a second bottle of every wine that has not been awarded a gold or silver medal and compares it to the bottle or bottles the judges tasted. If she finds any sign of bottle variation, that wine is seamlessly fed back into the judging schedule.

### The way we taste and score

As usual, the Riedel Veritas Champagne Glass was our choice of glassware. The Veritas bowl is elegant, with the thinnest rim and an exquisitely slender stem. Its stem-to-bowl ratio is ideal for swirling, nosing, and assessing, while the joints are seamless, thanks to a proprietary machine-pulling technology. All the judges see are glasses, never bottles, because the wines are poured into coded glasses before being brought to the judges.

We first taste a flight of wines independently and give our scores. When there is not an immediate consensus after the initial count of scores, we discuss and often retaste the wine. Thus, each medal awarded is the wholehearted decision of the entire panel, not an unfair average. Because the competition is about sparkling-wine excellence, we only award gold and silver medals. For prestige cuvée Champagnes, the bar is raised even higher: gold exclusively.

- Gold: 18.5–20 points
- Silver: 17–18 points
- Bronze (theoretical, not awarded): 15.5–16.5 points
- No award: 12.5–15 points
- Possibly faulty: 12 points
- Definitely faulty: 11 (and the judge must name the fault)

### The 2021 results

2021 ended up as our most decorated medal year yet, with a total of 139 gold and 268 silver medals awarded to wines from 19 countries. Well in excess of 1,000 sparkling wines were judged, with Italy at the top of the leader board with 58 gold and 129 silver medals. They were closely followed by France, which took home 52 gold and 50 silver medals. The UK was again in third position, followed by Australia and the USA.

Left: The 2021 CSWWC team at Champneys.  
Above: Essi Avellan MW begins a new flight.



## The battle for Supreme World Champion is very tight every year. This time, our hearts and palates were most taken by the extremely classy Dom Ruinart Rosé 2004

The bar was set very high from day one, and the medal and trophy count certainly reflects this. It is, however, the competition's mission not only to promote world-class wines but also to discover and reward new and exciting wines from established and emerging regions across the world. The biggest surprises of the year came from Japan, Russia, and Sicily. Although Japan received only one silver, it clearly showed this country's potential for serious sparkling wine, and we look forward to a wider range of Japanese entries in the future. For Abrau-Durso Russian Sparkling Wine House, 2021 revealed a change of quality to a brighter, purer style. (All the sadder, then, that we will not be accepting any Russian entries in 2022, when we will be granting free entry to any Ukrainian winery wishing to participate.) Last year we were surprised when Sicily won two gold medals and four silvers, but this year we were dumbfounded by their five golds and 11 silvers.

Despite the Covid-induced drama in this year's competition, we were very pleased with the final results. Many of the usual suspects shone brightly, but we also found new winners for some of the key trophies. Ca' del Bosco snapped the hotly contested Best Italian title for the first time, with its Annamaria Clementi 2011 in magnum, while newcomer Sauska took the Best Hungarian Sparkling Wine title with its NV Brut. Champagne Henriot made its major trophy debut by winning the World Champion Classic Rosé with its NV Rosé in magnum.

The battle for the Supreme World Champion title is very tight every year, because the competition attracts a great many of the sparkling-wine elite's top wines in large formats. When tasting these spectacular bottles—comparing perfection with perfection—I always feel like a kid in a candy store. This time, our hearts and palates were most taken by the extremely classy and intriguingly layered Dom Ruinart Rosé 2004 in magnum, which raised Champagne Ruinart onto the competition's highest podium for the first time.

The Trentodoc gem Ferrari performed magnificently once again, claiming back the Sparkling Wine Producer of the Year title from Louis Roederer. And it was great to see, for the first time, a few contenders for this award snapping at Ferrari's and Louis Roederer's heels—they will need to look out in 2022!



## NATIONAL CHAMPION TROPHIES

### AUSTRALIA

#### BEST AUSTRALIAN SPARKLING WINE

##### The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Swift NV Cuvée  
BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN VINTAGE BRUT: Chandon 2015 Vintage Brut  
BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN BLANC DE BLANCS: Bream Creek Vineyard 2015 Blanc de Blancs  
BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN ROSÉ: Clover Hill 2016 Exceptionnelle Vintage Rosé  
BEST IN CLASS AUSTRALIAN MAGNUM: House of Arras 2008 Grand Vintage in Magnum

##### The winner:

#### Bream Creek Vineyard 2015 Blanc de Blancs

Tasmania, Australia (75cl, 12.5% ABV);  
100% Chardonnay (White, 5g RS)

This vibrant and driven Tasmanian sparkling wine comes with lovely toasty complexity over the pristine fruit of lemon, melon, green apple, and white pepper. The palate is racy yet rich, leaving an overall impression of completeness and energy. Very youthful, with slowly building layers and an alluringly untamed nature.

### BULGARIA

#### BEST BULGARIAN SPARKLING WINE

#### Midalidare Estate NV Gold in Magnum

Mogilovo Village, Thracian Lowland, Bulgaria (150cl, 12% ABV);  
100% Chardonnay (White, 5.5g RS)

The winner of Best Bulgarian Sparkling Wine for 2021 is the Best in Class Bulgarian Blanc de Blancs and Best in Class Bulgarian Magnum. The main attraction in this creamy wine is its bright and sweet fruitiness oozing confit lemon and yellow apple. The lees complexities are emerging, but the wine remains highly youthful with plentiful energy. Yet the palate comes with good volume and a soft, caressing mousse.

### CANADA

#### BEST CANADIAN SPARKLING WINE

#### Two Sisters Vineyards NV Lush Sparkling Rosé

Niagara Peninsula VQA, Ontario, Canada (75cl, 12% ABV), 83% Chardonnay, 16% Pinot Noir, 1% Cabernet Franc (Rosé, 8g RS)

The winner of Best Canadian Sparkling Wine for 2021 is the Best in Class Canadian Rosé. Peachy by color, and the nose comes with peach-toned fruit. The overall impression is cool and crisp, with the juiciness on the palate enhancing its delightful quaffing character. The mousse is soft and somewhat foamy, yet the palate retains its freshness until the long, sweetly fruity finish.

### GREAT BRITAIN

#### BEST ENGLISH SPARKLING WINE

##### The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH VINTAGE BRUT: Squerries 2016 Squerries Brut in Magnum  
BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH BLANC DE BLANCS: Squerries 2016 Squerries Blanc de Blancs  
BEST IN CLASS ENGLISH ROSÉ: Digby Fine English NV Leander Pink

##### The winner:

#### Squerries 2016 Squerries Brut in Magnum

Kent, England (150cl, 12% ABV);  
43% Chardonnay, 34% Pinot Noir,  
23% Meunier (White, 8g RS)

It was a hat trick for Squerries this year, with a whopping three gold medals. The other golds were for wines in bottle, but this magnum had what it takes to win the title of Best English Sparkling Wine. It came with a smoke-complexed, softly fruity nose and a palate full of crunchy fruit. The overall feeling was elegant and flirtatiously relaxed, showing charming effortlessness.

### FRANCE

#### BEST NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE

##### The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Louis Roederer NV Collection 242  
BEST IN CLASS NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BRUT: Louis Roederer 2013 Brut Vintage in Magnum  
BEST IN CLASS NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE BLANC DE BLANCS AND BEST IN CLASS NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE MAGNUM: Palmer & Co NV Blanc de Blancs in Magnum  
BEST IN CLASS NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Ayala 2014 Le Blanc de Blancs



BEST IN CLASS NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE BLANC DE NOIRS: Palmer & Co NV Blanc de Noirs  
BEST IN CLASS NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BLANC DE NOIRS: Thiénot 2010 Garance in Magnum  
BEST IN CLASS NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ: Henriot NV Rosé in Magnum  
BEST IN CLASS NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE ROSÉ: Louis Roederer 2012 Brut Rosé in Magnum  
BEST IN CLASS SINGLE VINEYARD CHAMPAGNE: Pommery 2004 Clos Pompadour in Magnum

##### The winner:

#### Palmer & Co NV Blanc de Blancs in Magnum

Champagne, France (150cl, 12% ABV);  
100% Chardonnay (White, 7.3g RS)

Although the Palmer & Co Blanc de Blancs is labeled Non-Vintage, it always comes exclusively from one vintage year. In the case of this remarkably fine magnum, it was 2008. The "Palmer has time" motto proved to be true, since very few other Non-Vintage blancs de blancs can boast such lengthy lees-aging times. The nose was a classy and polished mix of aromatic wood, lemon confit, and refined toasty tones. The palate won us over by its impeccable focus and precision.

### BEST DELUXE CHAMPAGNE

##### The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BRUT: Rare Champagne 2008 Brut  
BEST IN CLASS DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE BLANC DE BLANCS: Dom Ruinart 2009 Blanc de Blancs  
BEST IN CLASS DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE ROSÉ AND BEST IN CLASS DELUXE CHAMPAGNE MAGNUM: Dom Ruinart 2004 Rosé in Magnum

##### The winner:

#### Dom Ruinart 2004 Rosé in Magnum

Champagne, France (150cl, 12.5% ABV);  
81% Chardonnay, 19% Pinot Noir (Rosé, 4g RS)

With an array of absolutely stunning wines to choose from, we truly are spoiled for choice for the Deluxe Champagne Trophy. This Dom Ruinart Rosé was bursting with character in all its Burgundian Pinot tones and complex aging aromas, ranging from sous-bois and coffee, to an intriguing mélange of spices and herbs. The orange-toned color showed some age, but on the palate the wine was remarkably youthful, even tight, thanks to its gracefully aging vintage year and the "magnum effect." So much berry and peach fruit packed in a magnum, with sublime vinosity meeting tension and depth.

### BEST LOIRE VALLEY SPARKLING WINE

##### The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS NON-VINTAGE BRUT: Bouvet Ladubay NV Excellence Crémant de Loire Brut  
BEST IN CLASS BLANC DE BLANCS: Bouvet Ladubay 2019 Blanc de Blancs Crémant de Loire Brut





**The winner:**

### **Bouvet Ladubay NV Excellence Crémant de Loire Brut**

AOC Crémant de Loire, Loire Valley,  
France (75cl, 12.5% ABV);  
80% Chenin Blanc, 20% Chardonnay  
(White, 12g RS)

This Chenin Blanc-led Crémant came with  
pristine, crunchy white fruitiness complemented  
by a whiff of toasty complexity. Classy overall  
impression, showing supple generosity and a  
laudable degree of finesse. The wine came with  
the appealing combination of creamy texture,  
brisk acidity, and lingering finish.

### **BEST FRENCH SPARKLING WINE**

**The shortlist:**

BEST LOIRE SPARKLING WINE: Bouvet Ladubay  
NV EXCELLENCE CRÉMANT DE LOIRE BRUT  
BEST CHAMPAGNE: Dom Ruinart 2004 Rosé  
in Magnum

**The winner:**

### **Dom Ruinart 2004 Rosé in Magnum**

See *Best Deluxe Champagne*

### **HUNGARY**

### **BEST HUNGARIAN SPARKLING WINE**

### **Sauska NV Brut**

Tokaj, Hungary (75cl, 12.5% ABV);  
45% Furmint, 35% Hárslevelű,  
20% Chardonnay (White, 9g RS)

The Best Hungarian Sparkling Wine for 2021 is  
Best in Class Hungarian Non-Vintage Brut. The  
Champenois blending genius Régis Camus of  
Charles Heidsieck and Piper-Heidsieck fame is  
also working his magic in Hungary now. During  
the competition, we were tasting the very first  
fruits of his work with Sauska. Overall, a very fresh  
and elegant wine, with pear and apple fruit and  
a gentle whiff of toast. Airy palate, with lovely  
linearity and drive. It will be fascinating to see the  
heights to which Régis can take this newcomer.

### **ITALY**

### **BEST ALTO ADIGE**

### **Kettmeir 2015 Pas Dosé**

Alto Adige DOC, Trentino-Alto Adige,  
Italy (75cl, 12.5% ABV);  
50% Pinot Bianco, 40% Chardonnay,  
10% Pinot Nero (White, 0g RS)

The Best Alto Adige for 2021 is the Best in Class  
Alto Adige Vintage Brut and Best in Class Alto  
Adige Brut Nature. We were impressed by the  
Kettmeir Pas Dosé's beautiful, toasty, and refined  
flinty tones over the cool, crunchy fruitiness.  
Despite being fully dry, the wine had a fine,  
long carry, energetic drive and an exemplary,  
precise mousse.

### **BEST FRANCIACORTA**

**The shortlist:**

BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE  
BRUT: Lantieri de Paratico NV Extra Brut  
BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE BRUT  
AND BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA BRUT  
NATURE: Ca' del Bosco 2011 Annamaria Clementi  
in Magnum  
BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE  
BLANC DE BLANCS: Fratelli Berlucchi NV Brut 25  
in Magnum  
BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE  
BLANC DE BLANCS: Ugo Vezzoli 2015 Extra Brut  
Limited Edition  
BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE  
ROSÉ: Guido Berlucchi NV 61 Rosé in Magnum  
BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE ROSÉ:  
Ca' del Bosco 2011 Annamaria Clementi Rosé  
BEST IN CLASS FRANCIACORTA BRUT NATURE:  
Vigneti Cenci NV Zero Pas Dosé

**The winner:**

### **Ca' del Bosco 2011 Annamaria Clementi in Magnum**

Franciacorta DOCG, Lombardy, Italy  
(150cl, 12.9% ABV);  
65% Chardonnay, 20% Pinot Bianco,  
15% Pinot Nero (White, 1.3g RS)

We awarded Annamaria Clementi 2011 gold in

both the bottle and magnum. If the bottle was  
complex and tropical with fruit in abundance,  
the large format added on the delights of the  
magnum effect: finesse, scintillating vivacity,  
and heavenly reductive toasty tones. We were  
very much taken by the fine balance of fruit,  
complexity, and refinement.

### **BEST LAMBRUSCO**

**The shortlist:**

BEST IN CLASS LAMBRUSCO RED FRIZZANTE  
AMABILE: Cantina Settecane NV Tradizione  
Amabile  
BEST IN CLASS LAMBRUSCO RED FRIZZANTE  
NON-VINTAGE SECCO: Cantina Settecane NV  
Vini del Re Grasparrassa  
BEST IN CLASS LAMBRUSCO RED FRIZZANTE  
VINTAGE SECCO: Chiarli 1860 2020 Villa Cialdini  
Grasparrassa  
BEST IN CLASS LAMBRUSCO RED FRIZZANTE  
SEMISECCO AND BEST IN CLASS ORGANIC  
LAMBRUSCO: Cantina Riunite NV Biologico  
Righi

**The winner:**

### **Cantina Settecane NV Vini del Re Grasparrassa**

Lambrusco Grasparrassa di Castelvetro DOC,  
Emilia-Romagna, Italy (75cl, 11% ABV);  
100% Lambrusco Grasparrassa (Red, 10g RS)

We had again quite an abundance of Lambrusco  
to taste this year. Our winner Settecane's Vini del  
Re came with an attractive fresh plum and fragrant  
blackberry nose. On the palate, we appreciated it  
for its soft and light, easy-drinking style in absence  
of any harsh phenolics or overly sweet tones.  
A lovely modern-style Lambrusco.

### **BEST PROSECCO**

**The shortlist:**

BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO NON-VINTAGE  
BRUT: Valdo NV Cuvée di Boj  
BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO VINTAGE BRUT:  
Andreola 2020 Dirupo Brut  
BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO DRY: Andreola 2020  
Vigna Ochera Rive di Rolle  
BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO NON-VINTAGE  
EXTRA-DRY: Le Fade NV Extra Dry  
BEST IN CLASS PROSECCO VINTAGE  
EXTRA-DRY: Follador di Rossi 2020 Extra Dry

**The winner:**

### **Andreola 2020 Vigna Ochera Rive di Rolle**

Valdobbiadene DOCG Prosecco Superiore Rive,  
Veneto, Italy (75cl, 11.5% ABV);  
100% Glera (White, 24g RS)

Andreola received a laudable four golds from us  
this year. This Rive di Rolle wine came with a lot  
of charm, partly thanks to its perfectly balanced  
24g/l of residual sweetness. The citrusy fruitiness  
added on the feeling of freshness and airiness,  
while the texture was truly creamy and caressing.  
All key characters of a fine Prosecco.

### **BEST SICILIAN**

**The shortlist:**

BEST IN CLASS SICILIAN BLANC DE BLANCS,  
BEST IN CLASS SICILIAN BRUT NATURE AND

**BEST IN CLASS ORGANIC SICILIAN:**  
Azienda Agricola G Milazzo NV Nature—V1  
**BEST IN CLASS SICILIAN BLANC DE NOIRS AND**  
**BEST IN CLASS SICILIAN MAGNUM:** Azienda  
Agricola G Milazzo 2011 Federico II in Magnum

**The winner:**

**Azienda Agricola G Milazzo  
2011 Federico II in Magnum**

Campobello di Licata VSQ, Sicily, Italy  
(150cl, 12.5% ABV);  
100% Chardonnay (White, 6g RS)

At least we proved to be consistent, since the very same wine also won the Best Sicilian title the year before. And we had a number of samples to taste, including the three other golds and 11 silvers from G Milazzo. Overall, an impressive result from this producer far away from the world's premier fizz terroirs. The winning wine comes with smart toasty exuberance tied to lush, zingy fruitiness and a creamy-textured palate. Really a finely crafted wine that is taking time remarkably well, considering the latitudes from which it originates.

**BEST TRENTODOC**

**The shortlist:**

**BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC VINTAGE BRUT:**  
Borgo dei Posseri 2017 Tananai  
**BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC NON-VINTAGE**  
**BLANC DE BLANCS:** Ferrari NV Brut  
**BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC VINTAGE**  
**BLANC DE BLANCS, BEST IN CLASS ORGANIC**  
**TRENTODOC AND BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC**  
**MAGNUM:** Ferrari 2014 Perlé in Magnum  
**BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC BLANC DE NOIRS**  
**AND BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC BRUT**  
**NATURE:** Ferrari 2012 Perlé Nero in Magnum  
**BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC NON-VINTAGE**  
**ROSÉ:** Ferrari NV Maximum Rosé  
**BEST IN CLASS TRENTODOC VINTAGE ROSÉ:**  
Maso Martis 2014 Rosé Magnum in Magnum

**The winner:**

**Ferrari 2014 Perlé in Magnum**

Trentodoc, Trentino-Alto Adige,  
Italy (150cl, 12.5% ABV);  
100% Chardonnay (White, 5g RS)

The serial winner Ferrari Perlé in magnum consistently excels in our competition (as do many other Ferrari cuvées). Its winning recipe comes from there being nothing overly ambitious or trying too hard in it, just sheer effortless deliciousness. This magnum just offered that utterly disarming combination of generosity and feistiness. As one judge put it, "Bloody rich yet precise."

**BEST ITALIAN SPARKLING WINE**

**The shortlist:**

**BEST FRANCIACORTA:** Ca' del Bosco 2011  
Annamaria Clementi in Magnum  
**BEST LAMBRUSCO:** Cantina Settecane NV  
Vini del Re Grasperossa  
**BEST PROSECCO:** Andreola 2020 Vigna Ochera  
Rive di Rolle  
**BEST SICILIAN SPARKLING WINE:** Azienda  
Agricola G. Milazzo 2011 Federico II in Magnum  
**BEST TRENTODOC:** Ferrari 2014 Perlé in Magnum



**The winner:**

**Ca' del Bosco 2011 Annamaria Clementi  
in Magnum**

See Best Franciacorta

**NEW ZEALAND  
BEST NEW ZEALAND SPARKLING  
WINE**

**The shortlist:**

**BEST IN CLASS NEW ZEALAND VINTAGE BRUT:**  
Hunter's Wines 2016 Mirumiru Reserve  
**BEST IN CLASS NEW ZEALAND BLANC DE**  
**BLANCS:** No.1 Family Estate NV Cuvée No.1

**The winner:**

**No.1 Family Estate NV Cuvée No.1**

Marlborough, New Zealand (75cl, 12% ABV);  
100% Chardonnay (White, 6.3g RS)

In Daniel Le Brun's No.1 Family Estate Cuvée No.1, he makes the exuberant New Zealand fruit meet the Champenois mastery of blending. The nose is elegantly fresh and on the yellow-fruit side, with lemon bringing expectations of zingy freshness. Toasty layers bring complexity to the pure, coolly fragrant nose. Long, intense finish ending on a deliciously sweet fruity note.

**ROMANIA**

**BEST ROMANIAN SPARKLING WINE**

**The shortlist:**

**BEST IN CLASS ROMANIAN NON-VINTAGE**  
**BRUT:** Carassia NV Classic in Magnum  
**BEST IN CLASS ROMANIAN BLANC DE BLANCS**  
**AND BEST IN CLASS ROMANIAN MAGNUM:**  
Carassia NV Blanc de Blancs in Magnum  
**BEST IN CLASS ROMANIAN ROSÉ:** Carassia NV  
Rosé

**The winner:**

**Carassia NV Rosé**

Transylvania, Romania (75cl, 12% ABV);  
100% Pinot Noir (Rosé, 9g RS)

Carassia won as many as three gold medals this year. And perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the rosé in 75cl bottle beat the two white magnums. But there was nothing accidental about its success as it excelled in the final tasting for World Champion Classic Rosé, too, ending impressively on the third place. A highly elegant Pinot Noir rosé, with

salmon color and peachy hues. The crisp and abundant fruitiness is peachy and citrusy, with a whiff of toast. The soft mousse supports the feeling of airiness and elegance. Long finish, ending on a purely fruity note and a gentle touch of firming phenolics.

**RUSSIA**

**BEST RUSSIAN SPARKLING WINE**

**Abrau-Durso 2018 Victor Dravigny Brut**

Krasnodar Region, Russia (75cl, 12.5% ABV);  
40% Chardonnay, 30% Riesling, 30% Pinot  
Bianco (White, 10g RS)

The first ever winner of the Best Russian Sparkling Wine title, Abrau-Durso wines are climbing up in quality vintage by vintage. A lot of the credit must be given to the *ex-chef de cave* of Moët & Chandon, Georges Blanck, who has been the winemaking consultant of Abrau-Durso since 2015. This wine deserved its gold by being laudably clean, rich without being heavy, and supported by sumptuous tropical and toast-complexed fruit.

**SPAIN**

**BEST CAVA**

**The shortlist:**

**BEST IN CLASS CAVA NON-VINTAGE BRUT AND**  
**BEST IN CLASS CAVA MAGNUM:** Freixenet NV  
Cordon Negro Brut in Magnum  
**BEST IN CLASS CAVA NON-VINTAGE ROSÉ AND**  
**BEST IN CLASS ORGANIC CAVA:** Vilarnau NV  
Vilarnau Rosé Delicat Brut Reserva Organic

**The winner:**

**Freixenet NV Cordon Negro Brut  
in Magnum**

Cava DO, Catalonia, Spain (150cl, 12% ABV);  
60% Macabeu, 20% Xarel-lo, 20% Parellada  
(White, 9g RS)

This wine really stood out in the blind tasting, notably due to the magnum effect, because we don't get as many magnums from Spain as we get from most other places. The finesse and freshness from magnum alongside the reductive gunpowdery characters created a seamless and juicy wine with energy and emerging complexity.

**BEST CORPINNAT**

**Gramona 2015 Imperial**

Cava DO, Penedès, Spain (75cl, 12% ABV);  
50% Xarel-lo, 30% Macabeu,  
15% Chardonnay, 5% Parellada (White, 6g RS)

The Best Corpinnat for 2021 is the Best in Class Corpinnat Vintage Brut and Best Corpinnat Organic Sparkling Wine. Truly a beautifully harmonious wine, with complex charred and smoky notes over the bright, fresh fruitiness. The creamy texture further enhances the mellowness and feeling of completeness. A wine at that fine crossroads where aged-derived complexity meets vivacity of youth.

**BEST SPANISH SPARKLING WINE**

**The shortlist:**

**BEST CAVA:** Freixenet NV Cordon Negro Brut  
in Magnum  
**BEST CORPINNAT:** Gramona 2015 Imperial



#### The winner:

#### Freixenet NV Cordon Negro Brut in Magnum

See Best Cava

#### USA

#### BEST CALIFORNIA SPARKLING WINE

##### The shortlist:

BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA NON-VINTAGE  
BLANC DE BLANCS: Chandon NV By The Bay  
BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA NON-VINTAGE  
ROSÉ: Chandon NV Rosé Signature  
BEST IN CLASS CALIFORNIA VINTAGE ROSÉ:  
Caraccioli Cellars 2015 Brut Rosé

#### The winner:

#### Caraccioli Cellars 2015 Brut Rosé

Monterey, California, USA (75cl, 12% ABV);  
60% Chardonnay, 40% Pinot Noir (Rosé, 8g RS)

The Best USA Sparkling Wine for 2021 is Best California Sparkling Wine. This Monterey wine is truly invigorating, with its zingy acidity and impressive energy. The peach-toned fruitiness is perfectly crunchy, and there are delicate layers bringing touches of toast and vanilla to the attractive aromatics. Linear, driven palate of beautiful length.



#### WORLD CHAMPION TROPHIES WORLD CHAMPION CLASSIC NON-VINTAGE BRUT

##### The shortlist:

FROM AUSTRALIA: Swift NV Cuvée  
FROM CAVA: Freixenet NV Cordon Negro Brut in Magnum  
FROM FRANCIACORTA: Lantieri de Paratico NV Extra Brut  
FROM HUNGARIA: Sauska NV Brut  
FROM LOIRE VALLEY: Bouvet Ladubay NV Excellence Crémant de Loire Brut  
FROM NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE:  
Louis Roederer NV Collection 242  
FROM PROSECCO: Valdo NV Cuvée di Boj  
FROM ROMANIA: Carassia NV Classic in Magnum

#### The winner:

#### Louis Roederer NV Collection 242

Champagne, France (75cl, 12.5% ABV);  
42% Chardonnay, 36% Pinot Noir,  
22% Meunier (White, 8g RS)

The brand-new Collection cuvée replaces Brut Premier in the Roederer portfolio. It was created

to adjust the house's Non-Vintage to the new era, when achieving ripeness is no longer the challenge, but rather retaining freshness. A key role is given to the newly established *réserve perpétuelle* of previous vintages kept in giant steel tanks for maximum freshness. Brilliantly toasted nose, with vanilla, lemon, and pencil shavings. The taste is fresh, firm, and elegantly layered. A superb effort from the very challenging 2017 base year.

#### WORLD CHAMPION CLASSIC VINTAGE BRUT

##### The shortlist:

FROM AUSTRALIA: Chandon 2015 Vintage Brut  
FROM CORPINNAT: Gramona 2015 Imperial  
FROM ENGLAND: Squerries 2016 Squerries Brut in Magnum  
FROM RUSSIA: Abrau-Durso 2018 Victor Dravigny Brut  
FROM FRANCIACORTA: Ca' del Bosco 2011 Annamaria Clementi in Magnum  
FROM NEW ZEALAND: Hunter's Wines 2016 Mirumiru Reserve  
FROM NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE:  
Louis Roederer 2013 Brut Vintage in Magnum  
FROM PROSECCO: Andreola 2020 Dirupo Brut  
FROM TRENTODOC: Borgo dei Posseri 2017 Tananai

#### The winner:

#### Louis Roederer 2013 Brut Vintage in Magnum

Champagne, France (150cl, 12.5% ABV);  
70% Pinot Noir, 30% Chardonnay  
(White, 9g RS)

There is such radiance to the fruit in this brilliant magnum. Gorgeously toasty nose, with fragrant biscuity and lemony appeal. The wine is extremely precise, with a super-chic mousse and near-eternal length. Saline and energetic, bursting with fruity power.

#### WORLD CHAMPION CLASSIC BLANC DE BLANCS

##### The shortlist:

FROM AUSTRALIA: Bream Creek Vineyard 2015 Blanc de Blancs  
FROM BULGARIA: Midalidare Estate NV Gold in Magnum  
FROM CALIFORNIA: Chandon NV By The Bay  
FROM ENGLAND: Squerries 2016 Squerries Blanc de Blancs  
FROM FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE:  
Fratelli Berlucchi NV Brut 25 in Magnum  
FROM FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE:  
Ugo Vezzoli 2015 Extra Brut Limited Edition  
FROM LOIRE VALLEY: Bouvet Ladubay 2019 Blanc de Blancs Crémant de Loire Brut  
FROM NEW ZEALAND: No.1 Family Estate NV Cuvée No.1  
FROM NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE  
NON-VINTAGE: Palmer & Co NV Blanc de Blancs in Magnum  
FROM NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE:  
Ayala 2014 Le Blanc de Blancs  
FROM ROMANIA: Carassia NV Blanc de Blancs in Magnum  
FROM SICILY: Azienda Agricola G Milazzo NV Nature—V1  
FROM TRENTODOC: Ferrari 2014 Perlé in Magnum

#### The winner:

#### Palmer & Co NV Blanc de Blancs in Magnum

See Best Non-Deluxe Champagne

#### WORLD CHAMPION CLASSIC BLANC DE NOIRS

##### The shortlist:

FROM NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE  
NON-VINTAGE: Palmer & Co NV Blanc de Blancs  
FROM NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE:  
Thiénot 2010 Garance in Magnum  
FROM SICILY: Azienda Agricola G Milazzo 2011 Federico II in Magnum  
FROM TRENTODOC: Ferrari 2012 Perlé Nero in Magnum

#### The winner:

#### Ferrari 2012 Perlé Nero in Magnum

Trentodoc, Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy  
(150cl, 12.5% ABV);  
100% Pinot Noir (White, 2.7g RS)

Blanc de noirs is such a challenging style with the wines' proneness to oxidation and heaviness. Ferrari's outstanding Perlé Nero magnum shows absolutely no such characters, with the magnum effect being strongly present from the toast-complexed, deliciously fruity nose until the very long, creamy-textured palate. It is taking time extremely well, keeping its superb freshness, leesy richness and delicious fruitiness.

#### WORLD CHAMPION CLASSIC ROSÉ

##### The shortlist:

FROM AUSTRALIA: Clover Hill 2016 Exceptionnelle Vintage Rosé  
FROM CALIFORNIA NON-VINTAGE:  
Chandon NV Rosé Signature  
FROM CALIFORNIA VINTAGE:  
Caraccioli Cellars 2014 Brut Rosé  
FROM CANADA: Two Sisters Vineyards NV Lush Sparkling Rosé  
FROM CAVA: Vilarnau NV Vilarnau Rosé Delicat Brut Reserva Organic  
FROM ENGLAND: Digby Fine English NV Leander Pink  
FROM FRANCIACORTA NON-VINTAGE:  
Guido Berlucchi NV 61 Rosé in Magnum  
FROM FRANCIACORTA VINTAGE:  
Ca' del Bosco 2011 Annamaria Clementi Rosé  
FROM NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE  
NON-VINTAGE: Henriot NV Rosé in Magnum  
FROM NON-DELUXE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE:  
Louis Roederer 2012 Brut Rosé in Magnum  
FROM ROMANIA: Carassia NV Rosé  
FROM TRENTODOC NON-VINTAGE:  
Ferrari NV Maximum Rosé  
FROM TRENTODOC VINTAGE: Maso Martis 2014 Rosé Magnum in Magnum

#### The winner:

#### Henriot NV Rosé in Magnum

Champagne, France (150cl, 12% ABV);  
40% Chardonnay, 50% Pinot Noir,  
10% Meunier (Rosé, 9g RS)

Time is really put to good use at Henriot, with its Non-Vintage rosé in magnum showing lovely

age-derived complexity without losing any of its freshness. The pale peachy color is in full sync with the elegant spice-laden fruit, with peach, vanilla, biscuit, butterscotch, and brioche. The palate is mellow, silky, and lingering, with a precise and long finish.

#### WORLD CHAMPION SPARKLING RED

##### Cantina Settecani NV Vini del Re Grasparossa

See Best Lambrusco

#### WORLD CHAMPION LIBRARY VINTAGE

The shortlisted wines are both deluxe Champagnes: Dom Ruinart 1998 Blanc de Blancs La Réserve Rare Champagne 1998 Brut in Magnum

##### The winner:

##### Dom Ruinart 1998 Blanc de Blancs La Réserve

Champagne, France (75cl, 12.5% ABV); 100% Chardonnay (White, 4g RS)

Ruinart entered the game of late-disgorged Champagnes with its 1998 Dom Ruinart La Réserve. Closed for *tirage* with natural cork, this wine showcases the best of what long lees aging can give. It is super-Burgundian in style, beautifully lined by reductive, smoky-mineral notes, wax, white pepper, and buttery generosity. There is a cool feeling given by the slightly vegetal edge to the fruitiness. It comes with amazing textural richness on the rich, rounded palate.

#### WORLD CHAMPION TONY JORDAN RISING STAR

##### Abrau-Durso Russian Sparkling Wine House

Abrau-Durso Russian Sparkling Wine House was a worthy winner of our Rising Star Trophy because 2021 revealed a notable change of quality to a much brighter, purer style compared to the past entries. The consulting work of the ex-Moët & Chandon *chef de cave* Georges Blanck is clearly paying off, with the top-of-the-line Viktor Dravigny Brut already showing gold-medal quality.



##### CHAIRMAN'S TROPHY

##### Carassia NV Rosé

Carastelec Sparkling Winery's Carassia wines have excelled in the competition before, so we have learned to expect a lot from this up-and-



## Who will be the first to win the Sparkling Wine Producer of the Year award in two consecutive years?

coming Romanian producer. Still, the performance of its NV Rosé was able to dumbfound the judges in the Supreme World Champion taste-off, when it shone beautifully in third position, earning it the Chairman's Trophy and raising our expectations further for the years to come.



#### SPARKLING WINE PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

##### Ferrari Trentodoc

This trophy is not a matter of choice or a vote, it is completely unbiased and based exclusively on the number of gold medals won. Historically, it has gone to either Champagne Louis Roederer or Ferrari Trentodoc, alternating from one to the other each year. The winners have been: 2014 Roederer (4 golds), 2015 Ferrari (8 golds), 2016 Roederer (10 golds), 2017 Ferrari (11 golds), 2018 Roederer (11 golds), 2019 Ferrari (15 golds), 2020 Roederer (11 golds) and in 2021 Ferrari (12 golds). Who will be the first to win this award in two consecutive years? Or will there be a new contender?



#### SUPREME WORLD CHAMPION

##### The shortlist:

BEST AUSTRALIAN SPARKLING WINE:  
Bream Creek Vineyard 2015 Blanc de Blancs  
BEST BULGARIAN SPARKLING WINE:  
Midalidare Estate NV Gold in Magnum  
BEST CANADIAN SPARKLING WINE:  
Two Sisters Vineyards NV Lush Sparkling Rosé  
BEST ENGLISH SPARKLING WINE:  
Squerries 2016 Squerries Brut in Magnum  
BEST FRENCH SPARKLING WINE:  
Dom Ruinart 2004 Rosé in Magnum  
BEST HUNGARIAN SPARKLING WINE:  
Sauska NV Brut  
BEST ITALIAN SPARKLING WINE:  
Ferrari 2014 Perlé in Magnum  
BEST NEW ZEALAND SPARKLING WINE:  
No.1 Family Estate NV Cuvee No.1  
BEST ROMANIAN SPARKLING WINE:  
Carassia NV Blanc de Blancs in Magnum  
BEST RUSSIAN SPARKLING WINE:  
Abrau-Durso 2018 Viktor Dravigny Brut  
BEST SPANISH SPARKLING WINE:  
Freixenet NV Cordon Negro Brut in Magnum  
BEST US SPARKLING WINE:  
Caraccioli Cellars 2014 Brut Rosé

##### The winner:

##### Dom Ruinart 2004 Rosé in Magnum

See Best Deluxe Champagne