

It's Swiss wine awards time!

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weinweltFOTO.CH Hans-Peter Siffert 00017247659PerthweinweltFoto.ch Adrian & Diego Mathier Nouveau Salguesen
Diego Mathier, Folissimo, Valais, Valais

Diego Mathier, Winery of the Year 2018 – Folissimo, Valais

Grand Prix du Vin Suisse, Gault&Millau

For Swiss wineries, the big awards of the year were handed out tonight in Bern, at the gala dinner that brings to a close the annual Grand Prix du Vin Suisse competition. There are some beauties here – you should not lack for interesting and very pleasing new wines to try in coming weeks.

The list of main GPVS winners follows. Top honours go to Adrian & Diego Mathier's Cave Nouveau Salguesen in Salgesch, Valais – the third time Mathier has won the Swiss Winery of the Year award. The GPVS is a joint project between Vinum wine magazine and Vinea in Sierre, which runs several wine competitions and holds the annual Vinea wine fair.

The autumn season of Swiss awards kicked off with Gault&Millau last week. They gave restaurant-goers their annual treat, the new list of top Swiss restaurants. This is no small thing, when you consider that the Swiss continue to have the highest density of Michelin stars in Europe and that this tiny country has some of the highest per capita expenditures on wine in the world. For the wine industry, this small wine planet is of interest because of its high spending on quality wines. It's called interest+knowledge, based on eating and drinking well. Yes, having a decent income helps.

Included in the 2019 Gault&Millau guides (there are two, one for French areas and the larger one covering German-speaking areas) is a list of the top 125 wine producers in the country, selected by Gault&Millau's jury of seven wine

industry professionals.

More awards are on the way. The Lauriers de Platine Terrevin awards for the best Vaud Chasselas wine are held in mid-November and the Valais Star awards which focus on the finest native grape wines are handed out in early December.

Gault&Millau names larger group

Gault&Millau began adding a list of top wineries to its guides just a few years ago, naming 100. But this year the list has grown to 125 because of the growing number of excellent wineries. The list reflects a reality noted by many Swiss wine writers in recent months: the young generation of producers in German-speaking areas is fast catching up to French language areas in terms of quality. A handful of very fine producers have dominated this area, which stretches from Basel to St Gallen and down to the Austrian, Ticino, Italian and Valais borders. But now the numbers are growing – 38 from this area for 2019 – and the future looks bright for this large “region”.

Note: if you're not yet familiar with the G&M website, check it out, some interesting things going on there, and I like their videos.

Grand Prix du Vin Suisse winners

Here's the bumpf from the GPVS press release: “No less than 39 wines (from a shortlist of 79) were awarded prizes across the 13 different categories, while Salquenen producer Diego Mathier swept the board, carrying off the coveted title of Swiss Winery of the Year for the third time as well as the Vinissimo prize for Best White Wine in Show. The red Vinissimo award was won by Uvavins-Cave de la Côte in Tolochenaz (VD), while the Prix Bio (organic prize) went to talented Geneva grower Bertrand Favre of Domaine de Miolan in Choulex (GE).”



Cave de la Côte's fun new tanks



Personally, I'm pleased from a market economy point of view that Mathier has won again, as his winery is good, competitive, continues to focus on quality, and he has his sights set high: the world. Switzerland needs more of this and less of the who's who in the neighbourhood approach to wine. I'm also extremely pleased to see Cave de la Côte taking this prize tonight: Prix Vinissimo "Coup de cœur" red: Gamaret Réserve Collection Inspiration 2015 AOC la Côte, Uvavins Cave de la Côte, Tolochenaz (VD). If you aren't yet convinced that Swiss cooperatives do superb wines, shame on you! Read my article on this winery and a recent one by Dennis Lapuyade on another Swiss cooperative, Provins. Cave de la Côte this summer won the world's best Chasselas prize, as well – a winery that should be in your sights. And a top prize for Gamaret, that very special Swiss grape, means we're going places with this new variety. Check out the GPVS awards this winery has won.

Without further ado, here are details from the press release, including links to the winners.

This year the awards were evenly shared by Switzerland's wine-producing regions, even if each tends to have its specialist areas of excellence (eg. Ticino which won all three of the Merlot category awards).

Valais is the largest Swiss wine region: wines from here won 15 awards, followed by canton Vaud (seven awards), Swiss German[-speaking] (six), Trois Lacs (five) and Ticino (four). Geneva took two awards, thanks to Sarah Meylan-Favre and her husband Bertrand Favre: Sarah's Gamay la Vigne Blanche 2017 from Cologny tied for first prize, while her husband took 3rd place in the 100% Gamaret, Garanoir and Mara category with his Garanoir 2017 (Domaine de Miolan, Choulex).

Special awards

Four special awards were given:

Prix Cave Suisse de l'Année (Swiss Winery of the Year) 2018: Adrian & Diego Mathier, Nouveau Salquenen, Salgesch (VS)

Prix Bio Suisse (Swiss Organic award): Chasselas Réserve non-filtré 2017 AOC Genève, Domaine de Miolan, Choulex (GE)

Prix Vinissimo « Coup de cœur » Blanc: Heida les Pyramides 2016 AOC Valais, Adrian & Diego Mathier Nouveau Salquenen, Salgesch (VS)

Prix Vinissimo « Coup de cœur » Rouge: Gamaret Réserve Collection Inspiration 2015 AOC la Côte, Uvavins Cave de la Côte, Tolochenaz (VD)

The full list of winners from the 12th edition of the Grand Prix du Vin Suisse

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