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Inaugural Foothill Wine Festival Competition Crowns Skinner Grenache Blanc Best White, Amador Cellars Estate Tempranillo Best Red, Gwinlan Estate Brut Best Sparkling and diVittorio Merlot Port Best Dessert Wine

Folsom, Calif., —May 21, 2021— The first ever Foothill Wine Festival Competition, open to wines bearing labels from any District 10 county, including Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Mariposa, Nevada, Placer and Tuolumne, was held in Folsom on Saturday, May 15. The Competition was sponsored by the Greater Folsom Partnership, which will host a consumer event to exclusively celebrate the wines of the Sierra Foothills on November 20, at the Palladio event center in Folsom.

Judges, which included media, sommeliers and wine buyers from throughout California and Nevada, awarded the **2020 Skinner El Dorado County Grenache Blanc** 100 points, praising its varietal purity, pristine balance, overall deliciousness and fun-to-drink factor, and it was crowned Best White of Show, in a showdown with the **Best of Show Rosé, Element 79 Abby's Rosé Fairplay Dry Blush**. The Skinner Grenache Blanc garnered 15 votes to the Rosé's 3 in final balloting.

The battle for Best Red was a bit more heated, with 18 reds in the final judging. The **2016 Amador Cellars Amador County Estate Tempranillo** was crowned **Best Red of Show**, with the Young's Vineyard 2019 Amador County Syrah, Young's Vineyard 2019 Amador County Zin, 2019 Skinner El Dorado Mourvedre and Jeff Runquist 2019 Esola Vineyard Zinfandel rounding out the top 6 in final balloting.

Best Sparkling went to **Gwinlan Estate** for their **2018 Estate Brut** from Fairplay, which scored 98 points. **Best Dessert** went to the **2005 diVittoria El Dorado Merlot Port**, which went head-to-head with the Toogood NV Eldorado Muscat port style wine, winning top honors.

Of the 397 wines judged, 23 were awarded Double Gold, meaning all judges on the three-person panel were in accord that the wine deserved a Gold medal. Scores of 95 points and higher were awarded to those wines. In addition, 44 wines scored Gold medals, with 190 of them garnering Silver medals.

Wineries scoring multiple Double Golds included Young's Vineyard, Jeff Runquist, Skinner and Element 79. Jeff Runquist garnered the most Double Golds with three.

The Double Gold winning Reds that vied for Best Red of Show were:

Amador Cellars 2019 Amador County Tempranillo
Young's Vineyard 2019 Amador County Syrah/ Shiraz
Young's Vineyard 2019 Amador County Zinfandel
Skinner Vineyards & Winery 2019 El Dorado Mourvedre/ Mataro
Jeff Runquist 2019 Amador County Esola Vineyard Zinfandel
Starfield Vineyards 2018 El Dorado Bronson Brothers Red Rhone-based Blend
Cooper Vineyards LLC 2018 Amador County Syrah/ Shiraz
Jeff Runquist 2019 Amador County Barbera
diVittorio 2005 El Dorado County Merlot Port
Toogood NV Sierra Foothills Muscat Portstyle Wine
Lewis Grace 2018 El Dorado Petite Sirah
Jeff Runquist 2019 Amador County Barbera
Wine Tree Farm 2016 Amador County Grenache/Syrah/Mourvedre Blend
Ironstone Vineyards Sierra Foothills 2017 Estate Meritage Reserve
Twisted Oak 2016 Calaveras County Dalton Vineyard "River of Skulls" Mourvedre
Element 79 Vineyards El Dorado; Fair Play 2017 24 Karat Red Blend
Noceto Shenandoah Valley (Amador) 2018 "Hillside" Sangiovese
Fenton Herriott Vineyards 2018 El Dorado Zinfandel
Lava Cap 2018 El Dorado; Sierra Foothills Cabernet Sauvignon
Wise Villa Winery Sierra Foothills 2018 Touriga Nacional (Other Red Varietals)

Competition Coordinator, Coleen Schwietert, noted, "Such a broad selection of Double Gold winning wines from Barbera to Mourvedre clearly demonstrates that the Foothills is so much more than Zinfandel! Congratulations to all the wineries who entered and shared their amazing wines with us and the team of judges from all over California and beyond."

A special thanks to Rich Cook, Chief Judge at the Monterey International Wine Competition, Director of the San Diego County Fair Wine Competitions and Director of Robert Whitley's Challenge Wine Competitions, for providing the glassware for this competition.

Mike Owen, President & CEO of Crystal Basin Cellars, developed and organized the Foothills Wine Competition in conjunction with Joe Gagliardi, CEO of the Greater Folsom Partnership.

"It was amazing to put together all of these wines from these great producers with all of the challenges we faced in getting this first-year effort off the ground. We are very thankful for the support and proud of the excellent wines our judges reviewed during the competition. It will be great to see these wines introduced to customers during the Foothill Wine Festival public event on November 20th at the Palladio in Folsom," said Owen.

Public Event Tickets will be available on the Festival Website:
www.foothillwinefest.com.

For more information, contact: foothillwinefestival@gmail.com

About the Greater Folsom Partnership

The Greater Folsom Partnership is a collaboration of the Folsom Chamber of Commerce, the Folsom Tourism Bureau and the Folsom Economic Development Corporation. Representing approximately 1,000 members, these organizations are the principal advocates for business and a vibrant economy to support the quality of life in Folsom. A website has been established for the Festival at www.foothillwinefest.com.

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