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■ Oyster Wine winners announced



By SeafoodSource staff

4/28/2009 10:12:44 AM – After a rigorous U.S. tasting competition involving 41 judges in three major West Coast cities, 10 wines were deemed the best accompaniments to oysters.

The 2009 Pacific Coast Oyster Wine Competition, the annual “dating service” to find the best West Coast wine matches for oysters, is now complete. Competition sponsor Taylor Shellfish Farms of Shelton, Wash., invited wineries to submit their best oyster wines, typically dry, crisp, clean-finishing white wines.

“The search for wines to go with oysters adds to the excitement of and culture of oysters,” said Bill Taylor, president of Taylor Shellfish. “It’s good for the oyster, it’s good for the growers, it’s good for the wineries, it’s good for the restaurants that sell oysters and it’s good for oyster-loving consumers.”

Each wine is blind-tasted with at least one Kumamoto (*Crassostrea gigas*) oyster. The judge chews the oyster well, sips the wine and rates the “bliss factor,” the wine’s affinity with the oyster.

The winners are as follows: Airfield Estates (Wash.) '08 Thunderbolt Sauvignon Blanc; Anne Amie Vineyards (Ore.) Cuvee A Amrita '07 White Wine; Cedergreen Cellars (Wash.) '07 Sauvignon Blanc; **Chateau Ste. Michelle (Wash.) '08 Pinot Gris; *Covey Run (Wash.) '07 Pinot Grigio; Hogue Cellars (Wash.) '08 Pinot Grigio; **Kenwood Vineyards (Calif.) '07 Sauvignon Blanc; **Robledo Family Winery (Calif.) “Seven Brothers” '07 Sauvignon Blanc; Rutherford Ranch (Calif.) '07 Sauvignon Blanc; and *Sweet Cheeks Winery (Ore.) '08 Pinot Gris. (*indicates a prior winner; **indicates a multiple prior winner).

Tasting competitions were held at the Water Grill in Los Angeles, Sutro’s at the Cliff House in San Francisco and Anthony’s HomePort at Shilshole Bay in Seattle. Judges were food and wine writers, restaurateurs, retailers and oyster growers.

The month-long competition is organized and produced by founder Jon Rowley of Seattle. During a week of preliminary judging in Seattle, five veteran preliminary judges consumed more than 1,200 Kumamotos to narrow the wine contenders to 20 finalists.

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