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## 2009 Pacific Coast Oyster Wine Competition Winners

By Maggie Dutton in News

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Last Thursday at the Seattle leg of the Taylor Shellfish Farms' Pacific Coast Oyster Wine Competition, Jon Rowley opened with the very popular passage from *Moveable Feast* by Hemingway about the job a proper mineral white wine performs when complimenting an oyster. It's one way to look at it, but we were told to rate the pairings on our "bliss factor" alone. I could have sworn, after downing 20 wines and 31 kumomotos that I was the best oyster wine taster ever. Then, I looked at the results... (after the jump: winners, along with a few insights)

I'm sure each city tasted the wines in different order, but the first three wines we tasted in Seattle made the list, which is either coincidence or the result of us judges being very happy to be there, on a postcard perfect day, with a dozen oysters in front of each of us. I believe this is also when they told us that we could eat as many oysters as we desired.

My professional guess is, many people start out excited, get into it, get serious, then get a little tipsy; so wine scores roller coaster a bit. Four of the last five wines we tasted in Seattle made the list. That could be the result of, well, let me tell you what 20 wines and 31 oysters does to you. It makes you very happy.

As for me, none of my top five made the list, but four of my bottom five did make the cut. I guess my factor of bliss is a little skewed from the median. I should say that all of the wines played well with the oysters, but I am a particularly harsh judge when it comes to wines that come off as too high in alcohol (it's a slap to the food).

The winners (in alphabetical order): Airfield Estates 08 Thunderbolt Sauvignon Blanc (WA), Anne Amie Vineyards Cuvee A Amrita 07 White Wine (OR), Cedergreen Cellars 07 Sauvignon Blanc (WA), Chateau Ste. Michelle 08 Pinot Gris (WA), Covey Run 07 Pinot Grigio (WA), Hogue Cellars 08 Pinot Grigio (WA), Kenwood Vineyards 07 Reserve Sauvignon Blanc (CA), Robledo Family Winery "Seven Brothers" 07 Sauvignon Blanc (CA), Rutherford Ranch 07 Sauvignon Blanc (CA), Sweet Cheeks Winery 08 Pinot Gris (OR)

I have to second the Sweet Cheeks (seriously?) pinot gris and Cedergreen Cellars sauvignon blanc for the perfect amount of fruit, meaning they didn't pick up a sour taste after the sweet, creamy oyster. Anne Amie had two other wines in the running, one a Muller Thurgau, that took my blue ribbon, but both of their wines have me looking into this winery. Covey Run's pinot grigio showed very well in addition to ranking among the most affordable of the contenders.

The moral of this story, and every tasting like this: The group may be able to return a consensus as to which wines will likely pair best with oysters, but it's still no predictor for the individual.

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