

# WINESTATE MAGAZINE

## - IS MY WINE ELIGIBLE -

With the exception of New Releases, each wine is eligible for entry multiple times throughout the Winestate Judging Calendar.

### NEW RELEASES

A wine is eligible for this tasting only once. If a wine has been judged by a previous Winestate panel it is no longer eligible. The vintage must not have been seen by the Winestate Tasting panel before in a previous edition.

The wine must be commercially labelled & available at time of publication – please email [tasting@winestate.com.au](mailto:tasting@winestate.com.au) for clarification of any dates.

### VARIETAL/STYLE TASTING

A wine must be at least 51% of the main varietal fruit to be eligible for a varietal & blends tasting.

*i.e.* Shiraz & Blends can feature a wine that is 51% Shiraz; 40% Cabernet; 9% Merlot to be a Shiraz blend.

Anything Less than 51% of the designated variety is not eligible.

**Sparkling** versions of these wines/blends are ineligible for any varietal tasting, as they are judged in the Sparkling Wine Show – early July.

**Sweet/Fortified** versions of these wines/blends are ineligible for any varietal tasting, as they are judged in the Sweet White & Fortified Wine Show – Late January.

*i.e.* Late Harvest Riesling cannot be judged in the Riesling Wine Show.

**Merlot/Bordeaux Blends** wine show is open to wines that are varietally dominant in the following categories: Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Malbec, Carmenere.

**Italian/Spanish/Portugese** this wine show is open to wines that are varietally dominant in the following categories: Sangiovese, Garnacha (Grenache), Tempranillo, Nebbiolo, Pinot Grigio, Barbera, Arneis, Fiano, Zinfandel, Aglianico, Montepulciano, Vermentino, Touriga, plus others – please contact [tasting@winestate.com.au](mailto:tasting@winestate.com.au) prior to tasting for confirmation.

### REGIONAL TASTING

Please see below for the regional breakdowns to see whether your wines are eligible:

#### ADELAIDE HILLS

*Piccadilly Valley, Mount Lofty Ranges, Lenswood*

#### BAROSSA/EDEN VALLEY

*Barossa Valley, Eden Valley, Springton, Mount Pleasant*

#### BEST OF THE WEST

*Swan District, Perth Hills, Peel, Geographe, Margaret River, Great Southern Pemberton, Blackwood Valley, Manjimup, Waneroo & Gingin*

#### CENTRAL & WESTERN NSW & CANBERRA REGION

*Central Ranges (Cowra, Mudgee & Orange), South Coast (Shoalhaven Coast & Southern Highlands), Southern New South Wales (Gundagai, Hilltops & Tumbarumba)*

#### CENTRAL & WESTERN VIC

*Bendigo, Heathcote, Goulburn Valley, Upper Goulburn, Central Victorian Highlands, Strathbogie Ranges, Ballarat, Pyrenees, Grampians & Henty*

#### CLARE VALLEY

*Clare Valley, Auburn, Mintaro, Leasingham, Penwortham, Sevenhill & Southern Flinders*

#### FLEURIEU

*Langhorne Creek, Currency Creek, Clarendon, Kangaroo Island & Southern Fleurieu*

#### HUNTER VALLEY & NORTHERN NSW

*Hunter Valley, New England, Hastings River*

#### LIMESTONE COAST

*Coonawarra, Wrattobully, Padthaway, Mount Benson, Mount Gambier & Robe*

#### McLAREN VALE

*McLaren Vale*

#### NORTH EAST VICTORIA

*Rutherglen, King Valley, Glenrowan, Beechworth, Alpine Valleys & Indigo Valley*

#### QUEENSLAND

*Brisbane & Scenic Rim, Darling Downs, Gold Coast Hinterland, Granite Belt, North Burnett, Somerset Valley, South Burnett, Sunshine Coast, Western Downs*

#### RIVER REGIONS

*River Regions of SA, NSW, Victoria, Riverina, Big Rivers & surrounding areas*

#### TASMANIA

*North West, Tamar Valley, Pipers River, East Coast, Coal River, Derwent Valley, Southern regions*

#### YARRA VALLEY & SOUTHERN VICTORIA

*Yarra Valley, Mornington Peninsula, Gippsland, Geelong, Sunbury, Macedon Ranges*

**For NZ Regions please contact: [kmorganty@winestate.com.au](mailto:kmorganty@winestate.com.au)**

### FEATURE TASTINGS

Winestate also runs feature tastings – including From The Producer; Brandy, Cognac & Armaganac; NASAA Organic Tasting; Wines of South Africa; Whiskies of the World. Please email [tasting@winestate.com.au](mailto:tasting@winestate.com.au) if you require any other information regarding these specialty tastings.

Following each tasting, the wines will be either used in Winestate Public Tastings, or donated to a charity function.

## - HOW WE JUDGE -

Our tastings and published ratings are designed with one thing in mind: to provide a useful, honest and genuine, balanced guide on wines to our readers. In order to achieve this we follow certain procedures in an activity that is notoriously difficult! There are regular criticisms of wine shows and various scoring systems; here is how we approach our tastings.

### A WIDE SELECTION OF WINES:

Wines are invited from any producer, provided that they meet the criteria of the class being judged. The class may be a feature, regional, style or new release tasting and generally the wines must be available for consumers to purchase, although we have museum and rare wine tastings as well.

### AWARDING SCORES:

Winestate carries out the judging using Australian capital city wine show procedures; where the wines are not known to the judges. The three judges taste the wines blind and assign a score without reference to each other. Once this is done, only then do they compare scores, and if there is dissension they re-taste the wines and come to an agreement. Scores are compiled using the 20-point International system: gold is 18.5 and above; silver is 17 and above and is an excellent wine; bronze is 15.5 and above and represents good wine. A reasonable, sound everyday drinking wine scores 15 (but does not gain a medal). A bland but clean wine scores 14. Below this score there are unpleasant flavours. These

final 'medals' are then converted into a star rating system for publication in Winestate. A gold means 5 stars, silver is 4, and bronze is 3 stars.

### THE BIGGEST JUDGING SYSTEM:

Winestate examines on average more Australasian wines per year than any other forum - more than 10,000. Compare this to the biggest show in Australia, the Royal Melbourne wine show, with just over 4000 entries.

### INDEPENDENCE OF ADVERTISING:

Winestate does charge a nominal entrance fee for wines submitted which covers our administration costs only, and will often purchase 'yardstick' wines to be evaluated where we believe that these are of consumer or trade interest, if these have not been entered by the wineries. In order to produce the biggest and best wine magazine, Winestate includes advertising; however, this is fiercely independent of any wine tasting editorial. Wine companies are advised of the blind tasting results and it is their choice to advertise if they wish, their awarded wine's review will be

featured regardless of advertising. The judges' decisions are final and these are published according to the judges' scores, whether advertising is taken or not.

### THE JUDGES:

We take care in selecting our judges. But remember: judges are human and their own preference will influence their scores. We use judges with complementary backgrounds and a three-person panel for each flight will include winemakers with technical expertise and often a marketing/retail expert who knows consumer tastes. Often one or more of the judges are Masters of Wine with vast international experience, and most judges have experience at local or city wine shows. When we are judging a region, for example, we will have a winemaker judge from that region because that person knows the local style. We occasionally balance that with a judge from outside the region and generally someone with broad and mature experience.

### HOW WE COMPARE

Winestate Rating	Comment	Wine show Medal	International 20 Point System	100 Point System
★★★★★	Outstanding	Gold	18.5 - 20	98 - 100
★★★★1/2	Excellent	High Silver	18 - 18.4	95 - 97
★★★★	Very Good	Silver	17 - 17.9	92 - 94
★★★1/2	Good/Very Good	High Bronze	16.5 - 16.9	90 - 91
★★★	Good	Bronze	15.5 - 16.4	88 - 89

Wine judging is an inexact art, not a science - even at the highest levels of proficiency. Accordingly, *Winestate* uses the star rating system which reflects a range, rather than a specific point score. Point systems indicate a level of accuracy that simply does not exist in our view and experience!