



**2023 National  
Amateur**

*Wine*

**Competition**

**Saint Louis, Missouri**

**November 7-9, 2023**



Featuring:  
Coravin® Wine Preservation System

To our fellow winemakers,

We invite you to submit your homemade wines to the 2023 American Wine Society (**AWS**) Amateur Wine Competition. The **AWS** has conducted this prestigious Amateur and Commercial wine competition annually for over 40 years. Based on feedback from you, we continue to improve our competition.

This year, we're continuing the use of the Coravin® Wine Preservation System. This will better protect your wines between initial scoring, best of category, and best of show judging. We will only require 750ml of wine per entry. Registration is required prior to shipping; Amateur Wine Competition labels must be attached to each bottle shipped to the competition.

To maintain our high quality and consistency we utilize **AWS** Certified Judges and industry winemakers to score, and critique submitted wines. **AWS** judges have completed a rigorous three-year training program, supplemented by extensive hands-on experience and periodic recertification. These judges are often sought out to judge in major US wine competitions. Amateur winemakers will also receive the actual scoring sheets and judges' comments for each of their submitted wines. This insightful feedback usually includes suggestions for improvements, when needed, and is often found to be more valuable than winning a medal.

We look forward to seeing your product in our competition. Also, please let me know what we can do to improve our 2024 competition.

Good Luck!

Vincent Williams

**AWS** Amateur Wine Competition

**DEADLINES**

Paperwork can be submitted now.

**Registration deadline is October 14, 2023**

Delivery of wine is accepted from September 5  
and the **delivery deadline October 21:**

Effingham Manor  
c/o AWS AWC  
14325 Trotters Ridge Pl  
Nokesville, VA 20181

**COMPETITION INQUIRIES**

Vincent Williams

618-363-3015

[AWC@AmericanWineSociety.org](mailto:AWC@AmericanWineSociety.org)

# Wine Classifications

Please read the Competition Guidelines. Wines containing less than 75% of one Varietal should be entered as blends.

## White Vinifera

*Table wines made from a Vinifera species of grape.*

- 105 Chardonnay – Unoaked
- 110 Chardonnay – Oaked
- 115 Albariño
- 120 Riesling (Dry)
- 121 Riesling (Semi-Dry)
- 122 Riesling (Semi-Sweet)
- 123 Riesling (Sweet)
- 130 Gewürztraminer
- 140 Sauvignon Blanc
- 141 Muscat
- 145 Petit Manseng
- 150 Pinot Grigio (Pinot Gris)
- 160 Viognier
- 195 Other Wine Vinifera Varietals
- 199 White Vinifera Blends

## Red Vinifera

*Table wines made from a Vinifera species of grape.*

- 210 Cabernet Sauvignon
- 220 Zinfandel
- 230 Merlot
- 240 Syrah/Shiraz
- 245 Barbera
- 250 Pinot Noir (Pinot Nero)
- 255 Nebbiolo
- 260 Cabernet Franc
- 265 Malbec
- 270 Sangiovese
- 275 Gamay
- 280 Petit Verdot
- 285 Tannat
- 290 Petite Sirah
- 295 Other Red Vinifera Varietals
- 297 Red Vinifera Rhône Blends
- 298 Red Vinifera Bordeaux Blends
- 299 Other Red Vinifera Blends

## White Hybrid

*Table wines made from grapes crossed from more than one species.*

- 310 Seyval
- 320 Vidal Blanc
- 330 Cayuga White
- 340 Traminette
- 360 Chardonel
- 365 Vignoles
- 370 La Crescent
- 395 Other White Hybrid Varietals
- 399 White Hybrid Blends

## Red Hybrid

*Table wines made from grapes crossed from more than one species.*

- 410 Chambourcin
- 415 Baco Noir
- 420 Chancellor
- 430 DeChaunac
- 440 Foch
- 450 Frontenac
- 460 Corot Noir
- 465 Marquette
- 470 Noiret
- 495 Other Red Hybrid Varietals
- 499 Red Hybrid Blends

## White Native

*Table wines made from a North American species of grape.*

- 510 Delaware
- 520 Diamond
- 530 Catawba
- 535 White Muscadines
- 540 Niagara
- 545 Other White Varietals
- 549 White Native Varietal Blends

## Red Native

*Table wines made from a North American species of grape.*

- 550 Concord
- 560 Cynthian/Norton
- 570 Red Muscadines
- 595 Other Red Native Varieties
- 599 Red Native Blends

## Mixed Blends

*Table wines made from grapes, from different main categories. (Examples: Vinifera/Hybrid, Hybrid/Native, Vinifera/Native.)*

- 610 White Mixed Blends
- 620 Red Mixed Blends

## Rosé

*Blush, pink or rose colored, grape table wines. Rosé Fruit Wines should be entered in the appropriate Fruit Category.*

- 660 Vinifera
- 670 Hybrid
- 680 Native
- 690 Blends

## Non-Grape

*Table wines made from fruits, vegetables, flowers, and grasses. (Also see "Mead/Honey Wine".)*

- 710 Apple or Pear Wine
- 720 Stone Fruits (ex: Peach, Plum, Apricot, Cherry, etc.)
- 730 Raspberry or Blackberry
- 735 Strawberry
- 740 Blueberry or Elderberry
- 750 Specialty (ex: Dandelion, Rhubarb, Citrus, Vegetable)
- 760 Cider/Perry (Apple/Pear)
- 790 Fruit infused
- 795 Other
- 799 Fruit Blends/Fruit-Grape Blends

## Non-Fortified Dessert Wines

- 820 Ice Wine
- 830 Late Harvest Wines
- 827 Other Non-Fortified Dessert Wines

## Fortified Dessert

*Dessert Wines over 16% alcohol*

- 830 Port Style
- 835 Sherries
- 896 Other Fortified Dessert Wines

## Mead/Honey Wine

- 900 Traditional/Show Mead
- 905 Melomel (Brewed with Fruit)
- 910 Metheglin (Brewed with Spice)
- 915 Great Mead/Sack (Brewed with more honey)
- 920 Short Mead/Hydromel (Brewed with more water)
- 945 Other

## Sparkling

*Wines made effervescent by Carbon Dioxide*

- 990 Sparkling Grape and Non-Grape including blends

# 2023 AWC Guidelines

## **Amateur Winemaker**

Amateur winemakers make wine either alone or in collaboration with other amateur winemakers. As an amateur competition, no individual or any member of the group should be directly involved with commercial winemaking. Any person who wholly owns, manages, supervises, or receives any form of compensation for being involved with the operation of any Bonded Wine Celler may NOT enter the **AWS** Amateur Wine Competition. Any inquiries regarding amateur status may be directed to the Amateur Wine Competition Chair. Neither growing grapes commercially nor investing in commercial wineries does NOT automatically disqualify an individual.

NOTE: The Code of Federal Regulations, Title 27, Part 24, Section 75 (27 CFR 24.75) allows amateur winemaking and entrance into wine competitions.

## **Announcement**

The Award Winners will be announced in mid-November. Winners will also be posted on the **AWS** website, [americanwinesociety.org](http://americanwinesociety.org), by December 15 and published in the **AWS NEWS**.

## **Best of Category**

The “Best of Category” winners will be clearly superior in their winemaker-designated category.

## **Best of Show**

The “Best of Show” wine will have an overall enological excellence that surpasses all other wines in the competition. The “Best in Show” judging will be done following panel judging and “Best of Category” judging.

## **Bottle Identification**

To identify which bottle is which wine from your entry, affix the labels from your registration confirmation email. The entry number would correspond to the entry numbers on your confirmation sheet.

## **Bottles – Cider**

To allow for initial scoring, Best of Category, and Best of Show judging, a minimum of 750ml of cider is required [One-750ml, two-500ml, or two-375ml bottles]. Still wine or beer bottles may be used.

## **Bottles – Fortified Wine**

To allow for initial scoring, Best of Category, and Best of Show judging, a minimum of 750ml of wine is required [One-750ml, two-500ml, or two-375ml bottles]. Fortified or still wine bottles may be used.

## **Bottles – Sparkling Wine**

To allow for initial scoring, Best of Category, and Best of Show judging, a minimum of 750ml of wine is required [One-750ml, two-500ml, or two-375ml bottles]. Sparkling wine bottle shall be used.

## **Bottles – Mead**

To allow for initial scoring, Best of Category, and Best of Show judging, a minimum of 750ml of mead is required [One-750ml, two-500ml, or two-375ml bottles]. Still wine or beer bottles may be used.

## **Bottles – Still Wine**

To allow for initial scoring, Best of Category, & Best of Show judging, a minimum of 750ml of wine is required [one-750ml, two-500ml or 375ml bottles]. Standard Burgundy, Bordeaux, or Schlegel-shaped bottles shall be used. Bag-in-box may be used in lieu of a bottle.

## **Capsules**

Capsules on bottles are permitted, but not required.

## **Categories**

Wines are judged in the “Wine Classification” category designated by the winemaker, so care must be taken to choose the correct category. For example, a sparkling wine entered in a still wine category would be considered a fault. If in doubt, contact the Amateur Wine Competition Chair.

## **Closures**

All glass bottles will be closed with an appropriate closure for the bottle.

- Fortified wine may use T-cork, natural cork, or synthetic cork
- Sparkling wines will use crown cap or cork with safety cage
- Still wines may use natural cork, synthetic cork or screw cap (bottles with threads must use screw caps)

NOTE: Natural cork is preferred for still wines to allow for the use of Coravin®

## **Commercial Winemaking**

Commercial wine making is a business enterprise certified as a bonded winery, authorized by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, for the production and sale of wine. Any wine that may be legally sold is not an Amateur Wine.

## **Commercial Winery**

Facilities of a commercial winery may not be used during any stage of wine preparation or storage. Using a winery as the starting or stopping shipping location is allowed.

## **Deadlines**

Registration information is due: October 14, 2023

Wine must arrive by: October 21, 2023

## Entry Fees

Entry fees cover the expense of qualified judges, competition correspondence, award medals, and the mailing of the judges' score sheets to each participant. One medal is presented or shipped to the winemaker per winning entry. Additional medals are available for purchase. Winemakers may choose to not apply for a medal but may still receive Best of Awards and judges' comments.

- **AWS** members without medal option: \$20/entry
- **AWS** members with potential medal option: \$25/entry
- **Non-AWS** members without medal option: \$30/entry
- **Non-AWS** members with potential medal option: \$35/entry

NOTE: The principal (first listed) team member of a wine-making team must be an **AWS** Member to get the member rate. There is no additional fee for the label competition beyond entering the wine competition.

## Estate Grown

Estate grown must be produced on the winemaker's property (owned or leased). Currently, we do not have a percentage designation for estate grown and the TTB definition doesn't apply since we don't require AVA labeling.

## Fanciful Names

Wines may be submitted with fanciful names; however, they should not be deceptive in nature (e.g., "All Chard" when only a small percentage of chardonnay is present). Care should be taken to avoid using trademark names or terms.

## Fortified Wine

Fruit or non-grape wines which are fortified with a distillate must be entered in the appropriate Fortified category.

## Fruit / Grape Blend

Blends that include grape wine and fruit wine must be entered in the Fruit category, fruit/grape blend, and designate proportions.

## Ingredients

Wines may not be produced from synthetic products. Wines must be free of artificial coloring or artificial flavor enhancers. Natural sugars, wood, or the effects of specialty yeast and/or supplemental tannins are allowed.

## Kit Wines

Wine kits and concentrate-based wines will compete side-by-side with fresh fruit and juice-based wines in all listed categories.

[NOTE: If the kit maker doesn't provide a breakdown of the varieties within the kit, you may enter "Kit" for the variety.]

## Label Competition

The label must be crafted by a winemaker (or team member) and attached to the bottle of judged wine using the same address and deadline. These will be judged by our certified judges or design professionals. Criteria in judging include creativity, information content, clarity, artistic appeal, and pizzazz.

Enter only one bottle label per winemaker.

Registering online: Check the box on the entry you wish to submit (above varietal breakdown).

Registering via paper: Record the entry number (above your signature) on the official entry forms for the wine label you would like considered.

A copy of the label needs to be emailed to the Amateur Wine Competition chair ([awc@americanwinesociety.org](mailto:awc@americanwinesociety.org)) for inclusion in the award announcement and **AWS** publications.

The submitter is responsible for not violating any copyright or trademark protections.

## Labels (other)

Winemaker labels may remain on the wine, even if they are not submitted for the label competition. Ensure that our competition label is affixed to the bottle so our staff can properly account for your entry.

## Mailing Label

In addition to the delivery and return address, it may be beneficial to include a label to help negotiate your shipper's requirements, such as:

ATTENTION

Food Samples for Evaluation

No Commercial Value – Non-Perishable

Conforms to IRS and FDA Restrictions

Not Taxable per 27CFR24.75

HANDLE AS GLASS

## Medals

The average scores from the judging panels will decide the medal for a given wine:

- Double Gold (All Judges score in the Gold range)
- Gold (17.0-20.0)
- Silver (15.0-16.9)
- Bronze (13.0-14.9)
- No medal (Below 13.0)

## Membership

Both **AWS** members and non-members may enter the competition. **AWS** members receive a discounted entry price.

## Multiple Entries

A winemaker may enter multiple wines into the competition; there is no limit to the number of wines that a person or team may enter. The same wine may not be entered by two different individuals. A single fermentation made into different final products (based upon residual sugar or finishing treatment) may be entered as two separate wines.

## Multiple Winemakers

If there is collaboration all persons involved must be named on the entry form and are considered as one entrant. Since this is an amateur competition, no individual or any member of the group should be directly involved with commercial winemaking.

## Notification of Receipt

Our volunteers periodically go to the reception point to check in wine, not daily. If you're concerned if the wine made it to the reception point, please ensure you have package tracking from your carrier.

## Packaging

Commercial wine shipping containers should be used. Every reasonable effort will be made to contact entrants whose bottles have broken to make arrangements for sending replacement bottles.

## Payment

Payment may be done via PayPal (with online registration), check/money order (mailed to registration address), or credit card (called or faxed to AWS offices).

**DO NOT INCLUDE PAYMENT WITH YOUR WINE SHIPMENT.**

## Re-entering Wine

Wines which received a GOLD or DOUBLE GOLD medal in a previous **AWS** Amateur Wine Competition are not eligible to be entered.

## Registration

Registration is mandatory by the deadline at our registration site (preferred), by mail, or by fax.

Online at

<https://aws.americanwinesociety.net/wc/index.php?comp=awc23>

Mail to: **American Wine Society**

Amateur Wine Competition

PO Box 889

Scranton, PA 18501

Call payment info to **888-297-9070** or fax to **570-344-4825**

Mail or fax registrants should not ship wines until they receive confirmation emails with the labels for the bottles.

**NOTE:** Only one registration per email address is allowed. If individual and team entries are going to be entered, separate email addresses are necessary.

## Results

The Award Winners will be announced at the **AWS** Conference (Nov 9-11, 2023). Score sheets and appropriate medals will be sent out by the end of December 2023. We will also have the information posted to the **AWS** website

(<https://americanwinesociety.org/amateur-wine-competition/>) by December 15th.

Best of Class awards should arrive by the end of January 2023 (based upon delivery from our awards and engraving company).



## Shipping

NO WINES WILL BE ACCEPTED AT THE COMPETITION—NO EXCEPTIONS.

The wine received between October 21 and the conclusion of judging will be judged but may be flighted separately in mixed categories which may affect the evaluation of the wines.

Place a copy of your wine registration in the shipping box.

It is the responsibility of the entrant to ship or deliver the entry wines to the competition-receiving site in good condition.

It is the entrant's responsibility to follow all applicable laws and regulations regarding the shipment of their samples for evaluation.

## Shipping Address

Ship to: **Effingham Manor**  
**c/o AWS AWC**  
**14325 Trotters Ridge Pl**  
**Nokesville, VA 20181**

NOTE: Include a copy of your online confirmation (or registration form WITHOUT financial information) with each of your shipments

## Single Variety

Wines entered as varietals should contain at least 75% of that designated varietal. Wines containing less than 75% of one varietal should be entered as blends. Winemakers must list all varietals and the percentage of each.

## Sparkling Wine

Fruit or non-grape wines which are sparkling must be entered in the appropriate Sparkling category.

## Varieties

Grape varieties are classified as *Vitis vinifera*, Hybrid, and Native. Native grapes are those of the following species: *Vitis labrusca*, *Vitis riparia*, *Muscadinia rotundifolia* (formerly *Vitis rotundifolia*), *Vitis rupestris*, or *Vitis aestivalis*.

## Vintage

Vintage is typically the year in which the preponderance of the fruit (or similar) was harvested if known. Non-vintage can be selected for multiple years or unknown vintage. Kit wines with unknown harvest dates may choose to add the date fermentation began.