



Gold

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For Immediate Release

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Top 2011 Seattle Wine Awards Go to Smaller, Newer Wineries

Up-and -coming vintners produce outstanding wines

SEATTLE – A majority of wine lovers probably haven't heard of Lake Chelan's Mellisoni Vineyards, Martedi Winery in Monroe or Walla Walla-based DaMa Wines. But they are likely to, soon. A handful of small wineries located in out-of-the way locations scored top medals in the recently announced 2011 Seattle Wine Awards (SWA.)

Seattle Wine Awards is the largest and most influential independent wine recognition program in the state. It announced the winning wines in 42 categories comprised exclusively from Washington state AVAs with unlikely winners from such locations as Renton, Whidbey and San Juan Islands.

An example of David vs. Goliath is the micro vineyard planted by Rob and Donna Mellison on the south shore of Lake Chelan. Located on a steep slope to take advantage of the sun and the glacial till soils unique to the newly recognized Chelan AVA, they have produced some well-regarded wines.

"We get a beautiful wind that comes across the lake from the Northwest that keeps the vineyard cool, allowing the grapes to continue ripening even when the temperatures are above 95 degrees," winemaker Mellison explained. "We have great soil with a lot of minerals plus good drainage. This wonderful *terroir* is what makes our grapes and wines special."

The Mellisons' proprietary 45 Degrees, Pinot Grigio and Riesling wines all swept Double Gold Awards in hotly contested categories, upsetting a host of long-established wineries and winemakers.

(More)

SWA Executive Director Christopher Chan observed, "This year's program clearly demonstrates it's all about the wine, not who you are and where you're from. The SWA provides opportunity for any winery to shine."

Martedi Winery in Snohomish County's suburban town of Monroe, received a Double Gold award for their highly rated Syrah in the \$21.01 - \$35.00 category. "We are really not in the wine-making fray of Woodinville. Out here in Monroe, I can be at one with the wine. Our wines have a brightness and soul. They have something to say." Winemaker Joseph Miglino said.

Housed in an unassuming Renton garage, Cedar River Cellars won a Double Gold for their Ava Crush Cabernet Sauvignon in the \$20.00-and-under category. "As a new 'nano winery', I find that competitions and submitting wines for critic reviews is very important for building our brand and generating awareness of our winery. Professional criticism helps our products and people. They let us fine-tune what works - and what doesn't. I am just blown away by the number of consumers who turn a blind eye to scores, reviews and medals thinking that they are meaningless..." said Cedar River Cellars winemaker Micah Nasarow.

About the Seattle Wine Awards

The Seattle Wine Awards is the largest and most comprehensive independent Washington wine recognition program in the state. Founded in 2006 by Executive Director Christopher Chan, the Seattle Wine Awards maintains the highest standards of integrity in the tasting and evaluation of Washington AVA wines. For a complete listing of all 2011 winners and a roster of the tasting panel, visit the SWA Web site at: www.seattlewineawards.com or contact the awards office at (206) 853-4677; E-mail: wine@seattlewineawards.com; Mailing Address: 1733 45th Avenue SW, Seattle, WA 98116-1910

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A selection of top Double-Gold Awards from smaller wineries:

White Proprietary Blends ~ All Prices

DOUBLE GOLD 2010 Mellisoni Vineyards "45 Degrees," Lake Chelan

Pinot Gris & Pinot Grigio ~ All Prices

DOUBLE GOLD 2010 Mellisoni Vineyards Pinot Grigio, Lake Chelan

Riesling ~ All Prices

DOUBLE GOLD 2009 Mellisoni Vineyards Riesling, Lake Chelan

Syrah ~ \$20.01 - \$35.00

DOUBLE GOLD 2008 Martedi Winery Syrah, YV

Merlot ~ \$20.01 & \$35.00

DOUBLE GOLD 2008 DaMa Wines Merlot, WWV

Red Varietals ~ \$35.01 & Over

DOUBLE GOLD 2008 Holmes Harbor Cellars Petit Verdot, WWV

Red Bordeaux Styles ~ \$20.01 - \$35.00

DOUBLE GOLD 2008 San Juan Vineyards "45," Destiny Ridge Red

Cabernet Sauvignon ~ \$20.00 & Under

DOUBLE GOLD 2009 Cedar River Cellars Ava's Crush, Rattlesnake Hills