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**Terroir New Jersey Wine Showcase brings together an elite panel of international expert evaluators to evaluate New Jersey grown wine in a uniquely cooperative event**

CAMDEN COUNTY, NJ (August 6, 2025): On July 19, 2025, an international panel of twelve world-class wine evaluators came to New Jersey to taste and evaluate New Jersey wine and select wines to be included in the first annual Terroir New Jersey Wine Showcase. The Showcase was originally conceived by several New Jersey wineries who wanted an independent perspective other than the traditional wine competition model and a platform to collectively promote the best of what New Jersey wine has to offer.

But this was decidedly NOT a wine competition. If a wine was evaluated by the judges to be excellent based on consideration of 15 quality factors, it would be designated as a Showcase wine. All New Jersey wineries were encouraged to submit wines made from any kind of fruit so long as it was 100% New Jersey grown.

Martin Moran, one of only 421 Masters of Wine in the entire world who flew in from Dublin to judge in this Showcase, put it succinctly: if your goal is to show what New Jersey fruit alone can produce, "It would be insane to do it any other way". The sense of place is the very thing that makes wine special and so different from beer and spirits.

The organizers of the Showcase had several very specific instructions for the evaluators:

1. Evaluate on a global scale. Do not inflate scores and do not evaluate as being is good for being from New Jersey. It should only be a Showcase wine if it is world-class.
2. Only those wines that are excellent - that in a competition would be deemed platinum or gold level - should be considered Showcase wines.
3. Write tasting notes and comments for all the wines - especially for the wines that don't qualify as Showcase wines. Because next year and the year after we will work to get them to that level - and be so much better for it.

The evaluating was done in the blind and in panels of three evaluators each. New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Ed Wengryn sat in on one panel as a guest observer and tasted along with the experts.

"As Secretary of Agriculture for the State of New Jersey, I was very excited to participate in New Jersey's first Terroir Wine Showcase", said Ed Wengryn. "The Showcase first and foremost highlights the quality wines that come from grapes and fruits grown in New Jersey. It even highlighted the different advantages for growing certain varieties in the different wine regions of the state. A big result of the Showcase was the detailed review of the wines tasted. Not every wine tasted resulted in high scores, but all participants received feedback on what was good and could be improved to make their wine better. This is a step forward in improving New Jersey wine quality even as we celebrated the exceptional wines showcased."

Secretary Wengryn went on to summarize by stating:

“The feedback I received from the international panel of judges was they are all now ambassadors of New Jersey Wine.”

Unlike in the competition setting, they weren't just picking winners and losers. Here, it was evaluating with a purpose.

In the end, 68 wines of the 132 entered were judged Showcase quality, and thus, world-class.

The expert evaluators said they had never had an experience like this one – where there were no winners and losers and the goals were: 1) to show the existing quality of the wines being made in a particular region, 2) help improve the quality of wine in that region going forward, and 3) collectively celebrate the region and the winemakers together. This is noteworthy coming from these are experienced professionals that have each judged hundreds of competitions all over the world. Equally surprising to them was that this cooperative and collaborative model was being developed in New Jersey which, for several of them – and for many – has a very different pop culture reputation.

The Terroir New Jersey Wine Showcase rewrote the rules of the old wine competition model and, in so doing, innovated a new and cooperative way to promote the potential greatness of a wine region. Martin Moran may have put it best - and quite possibly come up with our wine region's new motto in the process - when he observed, to paraphrase Sinatra -

“This state has a great future in winemaking. You should be saying, "New Jersey Wine. - We do it our way.”

*About the Terroir New Jersey Wine Showcase: Terroir New Jersey comprises wineries, growers, and supporters who are committed to producing quality wines from New Jersey grown fruit. We prioritize transparency, adherence to national quality standards, and support for growers and fellow wineries to foster collective improvement. Through this commitment, we aim to attain recognition and respect for the New Jersey wine industry. The Showcase is not a competition but a platform to set standards and benchmarks for wine quality in our state and is independently financed as a non-profit venture by the participating wineries.*

Click here for the list of Showcase Selection Wines: <https://starofshow.com/results/njgshow>