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Surry Cellars wins N.C. Fine Wines Society award

ON THE VINE

Staff Report



Surry Cellars, the label for wine produced through Surry Community College's Viticulture and Enology program, was recently awarded the title of Best Hybrid for its 2013 Specialty Lot 152 Sparkling wine in the N.C. Fine Wines Society's first wine competition. From left, Surry's Enology Instructor David Bower, Sciences Division Chair Ashley Morrison and Viticulture Instructor Joseph Geller pose with bottles of the wine and the award.

Submitted photo

DOBSON — Surry Cellars, the label for wine produced through Surry Community College's Viticulture and Enology program, was awarded the title of Best Hybrid for its 2013 Specialty Lot 152 Sparkling wine in the N.C. Fine Wines Society's first wine competition.

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Forty wineries submitted 146 wines by open invitation for the competition. The wine was judged Jan. 30 and 31 at Graylyn Conference Center in Winston-Salem in a blind tasting by eight certified advanced sommeliers who do not have ties to the state's wine industry. The competition was purposely done independently of members of the state's wine industry. Even society board members didn't know what wineries or wines were in the competition, aside from any wines they submitted themselves. The winners were announced Feb. 18 at the N.C. Fine Wines Society's first annual gala at the Millennium Center in Winston-Salem.

To be eligible, a wine had to be: 100 percent grown and vinified in the state of North Carolina; made from vinifera or hybrid grapes, or a combination (No native grapes, such as muscadine, were allowed.); and available in quantities of 21 cases or more, so people could try the winners.

Surry's Enology Instructor David Bower described the wine, "The Lot 152 Sparkling wine was made in 2013 and bottle-fermented, and aged on the lees for three years before disgorgement. The result is a wine that is clear and bright with a pale-yellow color. The wine opens with aromas of rhubarb and baking spice, matched with citrus like lemon and lime. Other aromas include tart strawberry, and lavender. The flavor is matching with bread and yeast characters, lemon, lime. The wine's body is medium to medium-full, and well-balanced but dry. The bubbles are persistent and lasting. The finish is crisp, refreshing and lingering. Overall, enjoy this wine with fresh seafood or hard cheeses."

The N.C. Fine Wines Society was set up with the intent of promoting the fine wines North Carolina has to offer while also providing scholarship money for those seeking training in the viticulture and enology industries. As the only licensed, bonded winery run by a community college in the Southeast, those at SCC were excited to receive recognition from a society with a cause so in line with the work done at Surry.

Ashley Morrison, Sciences Division chair at SCC, said, "This award is about more than wine excellence, it showcases that Surry Community College's Viticulture and Enology (VEN) program produces quality graduates skilled in growing and making award-winning wines. One of the purposes of this competition is scholarship; it is fitting that SCC's students would be honored for a wine they crafted from grapes that they grew in our vineyard. Our VEN program provides the knowledge and hands-on training that our students need to achieve their dreams; therefore, seeing the success of our graduates and current students is the greatest award."

Surry's VEN program offers a degree, diploma and certificate options with tracks in viticulture, enology, and marketing. Surry offers additional viticulture and enology workshops throughout the year through the Corporate and Continuing Education department. To learn more about SCC's VEN program, visit www.surry.edu/wine.