

COMMERCIAL WINE

2026 COMPETITION GUIDE

It's your moment to shine! Enter today.

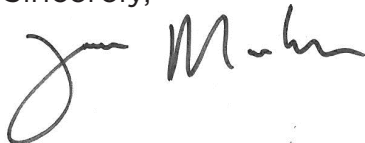
For more than 170 years the California State Fair has been a constant showcase of the talents and achievements of the people of California. Entering into the California State Fair's 2026 Competitive Exhibits Program allows you the opportunity to showcase your abilities, and revel in your accomplishments!

The California State Fair's friendly competitions are designed to acknowledge the best of the Golden State. Our Competitive Programs inspire talented Californians, as well as highlight the latest advances in technology, agriculture, and industry.

More than 750,000 visitors are expected at the State Fair this summer. Your work is an integral part of the State's celebration, and we look forward to seeing your talents on display during the annual State Fair from July 17 to August 2.

We encourage you to enter today and begin making lasting memories for yourself, and for the hundreds of thousands of State Fair patrons!

Sincerely,



Tom Martinez

Chief Executive Officer

GOVERNOR

Gavin Newsom

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January 8, 2025

On behalf of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, a warm welcome to you as we all prepare for the exciting 2025 fair season! We are thrilled you are joining us this year and sincerely thank you for your continued involvement in showcasing your products, livestock, and expertise. Your contributions help make our fairs successful and provide an invaluable experience for our communities.

Fairs play an essential role in connecting food and agriculture with the public. They are not only a time for us to celebrate the fruits of our labor, but also serve as a critical platform for educating future generations about the importance of farming and food production, livestock management, and sustainable practices. Through your participation, you directly contribute to the appreciation of the vital role agriculture plays in our lives and foster an understanding of the tremendous diversity, innovation and new technology that create new opportunities in agriculture and our rural communities.

The fairgrounds are not just a venue for the annual events. Throughout the year, they serve as a hub for various interim activities that support local economies, offer educational programming, and foster community engagement. From hosting agricultural workshops and livestock sales to providing facilities for regional competitions and cultural festivals, the fairgrounds contribute to the vibrancy and resilience of our agricultural community. Additionally, they play an important role in emergency preparedness, providing a space for disaster response and recovery efforts during critical situations, such as flooding or extreme weather events.

We understand the dedication and hard work that goes into preparing for the fair, and we want to express our deep gratitude for your commitment to making each fair season a success. Your participation ensures the continued relevance of our fairs and strengthens the agricultural ties that bind us all together as a community.

We look forward to this fair season and its great success!

Yours truly,

Karen Ross
Secretary





Showcase your award winning Wine in the Guide to the Best of California Magazine!

The Guide to the Best of California Magazine showcases the Double Gold and Gold winning wine, craft beer, cheese and olive oil from the 2026 California State Fair competitions.

Showcase your award winning wine and reach wine enthusiasts eager to learn about the Best of California wines in one publication.

The guide is marketed as a resource all year long and is available on the official California State Fair website, shared on Facebook, Instagram, and X to over 220,000 followers, emailed to 100,000+ people, and 10,000 print magazines are distributed at high profile locations, and Farm-to-Fork events:

- ✿ Governor's Office and State Capitol
- ✿ California State Fair Wine Garden & Wine Experience Classes
- ✿ California State Fair Hot Spots
- ✿ Industry & Community Events

Ad spaces are available in the Guide to the Best of California Magazine starting at \$2,250.

Contact Event Partnership:

Holly Palandoken
Holly@eventpartnership.net
805.888.9165



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https://castatefair.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2026-General-Rules.pdf	

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO KNOW

Contact: Wine Competition Coordinator
E-mail: wine@calexpo.com
Mobile: (916) 263-3159

Entry Dates:

February 1	Entries Open
March 30 - April 24	Wine accepted in our temperature controlled warehouse Warehouse hours: 9AM-4PM Monday-Friday
April 24	Entries Close
May 6 - 8	Judging Dates

The California State Fair July 17 - August 2, 2026

The California State Fair was originally formed as the California Agricultural Society in 1854. The goal was to provide a public platform for competition, showcasing the very best the State of California had to offer. Many innovations were first showcased at the annual State Fair. We continue the tradition today of showcasing the Best of the Best from all over the State!

Why enter the Competition?

The California State Fair Commercial Wine Competition has long been one of the most esteemed competitions in the United States with a history that goes back to 1855. It is the oldest in the state and is the rare competition dedicated to evaluating only California wines.

Wine Judges are selected from respected winemakers, wine merchants, writers, promoters, and educators. Your entry fee entitles you to have your wines evaluated by these industry-leading professionals.

The California State Fair will be highlighting and celebrating the winners in press releases as well as showcasing them in all of our social media platforms. We also have the Top Winners individually highlighted on our website, as well as a link to their website, giving the public the ability to purchase their wines!

COMPETITION OVERVIEW



The California State Fair Wine Competition has been an integral part of California's wine industry for 17 decades. Our mission is to guide the state's consumers, offer benchmarks for California's wineries and vineyards and encourage and stimulate the continued growth and improvement of the California wine industry at every level of the competition. This mission has been upheld and maintained for over 170 years.

Mountains, Oceans, Desert and Everything In-between

One of the competition's most important points is its emphasis on place. Wines are categorized by where the grapes are grown, not the site of the winery.

It is the only competition to partition California into 11 wine regions and to recognize the best wines of each.

In addition, the California State Fair selects and recognizes:

- Best of Show Red Wine
- Best of Show White Wine
- Best of Show Sparkling Wine
- Best of Show Pink Wine
- Best of Show Dessert Wine
- Golden State Winery of the Year
- Best of Show Micro Red Wine
- Best of Show Micro White Wine
- Best of Show Micro Other Wine
- Best Value Wine

The State Fair Commercial Wine Competition holds a unique and important place in California's wine industry and its culture. Its significance comes from history, its esteemed panels of judges, reach and impact across the state and the country, and the demonstration by its judges through decades of a top standard of professionalism, excellence, and fairness. It is here that the industry, educators, journalists, and wine lovers in California and around the world can find a true assessment of the high quality of California wine.



Additional Information

This guide is produced in advance and is subject to any action that may cause revision or curtailment of classes, divisions, sections, awards, premiums or regulations as listed.

Mailing list and Notification: Although we try to keep mailing lists current, we cannot be held responsible for any winery that is not notified or contacted. Our deadline for accepting entries is April 24, 2026. Exceptions may be granted at the sole discretion of the California State Fair and will require a late fee.

How to Enter

1. Online Entry at www.enofileonline.com
2. Log in to your account or select “Register” to set up a new account. If you cannot remember your login, contact enofile at info@enofileonline.com or by phone at 971-220-5047.
3. Register your wines.
4. We would like you to send a current wine label for each entry, or download (preferred method) online.
5. Ship or deliver your entry with a copy of your online receipt or with payment and entry form. See Delivery and Shipping Requirements (page 13)

If you have any questions, please contact:

California State Fair - Commercial Wine Competition
1600 Exposition Blvd. Sacramento, CA 95815
916-263-3159; wine@calexpo.com

6. **SPECIAL NOTE: Please ensure that your contact information in Enofile is current. This is critical so we can contact you during and after the competition for urgent matters relating to your submissions and awards.**

RULES & REQUIREMENTS

Our goal is to make registration easier and faster for everyone, and we encourage all entrants to use the online option. Entry and details at CaStateFair.com/competitions, scroll down and click on the Commercial Wine icon on the competitions page. Following is the QR code to the competitions page.



Eligibility Requirements

1. Any grape or fruit product grown in California and processed in a bonded wine premises is eligible for entry. Types of products include: wine, brandy, port, sherry, low alcohol wine, de-alcoholized wine or vermouth. Products made in other states are eligible if 75 percent or more of the product is from grapes or fruit grown in California.
2. An official entry shall consist of one of the following:
 - a. Six 750 ml bottles
 - b. Six 1L bottles or boxes
 - c. Six 1.5L bottles or boxes
 - d. Seven bottles or cans less than 750ml (i.e. 375 ml, 500ml, etc)
 - e. Twelve 250ml cans
 - f. Three 3L boxes
 - g. One, Two or Three 5L box(es) (Contact Coordinator for assistance if needed)
 - h. For categories 195, 295, 695 (micro wineries), 701-705, and 901-941, please send three 750 ml bottles or four 375 ml bottles.
3. If the wine has not been produced by the entering winery, the entrant must have performed at least one of the following processes, or have contracted for it to be done at a bonded facility:
 - a. Grown the grapes
 - b. Crushed the grapes
 - c. Fermentation
 - d. Blending
 - e. Cellar treatment
 - f. Cellar aging
 - g. Bottling

This is to allow the inclusion of negociant wines, or wines bottled to the account of the grape grower.

Minimum Quantity Requirements

1. The wine entered must be part of a single lot of at least 300 gallons of identically finished wine (approximately 125 9L cases). The only exceptions are the microwinery classes 195, 295, and 695 (see page 19).
2. A minimum quantity of 240 gallons (approximately 100 9L cases) must be available for sale to the public either at the winery or through normal licensed wholesale/retail distribution channels through the closing day of the California State Fair, August 2, 2026. The only exceptions are the microwinery classes 195, 295, and 695 (see page 19).
3. All entering wineries must reserve and hold until July 1, 2026, a minimum of 10 cases of each Double Gold and Gold medal winning wines for the use at the 2026 Wine Garden.
4. The winery must sell the wine to this designated party at a normal wholesale price. The only exceptions are the microwinery classes 195, 295, 695 (see page 19), and 701, 702, 703, 704, and 705.

Wine Delivery Time Frame

The first day wines will be accepted in the cellar is Monday, March 30, 2026. Entries close on Friday, April 24, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. **PLEASE INSTRUCT YOUR SHIPPER TO DELIVER NO LATER THAN 4PM.**

Entry Fee

The fee is \$75.00 from February 2 - March 14, 2026 and \$95 from March 15 - April 24, 2026 per individual wine and must accompany every entry. Entry fees are not refundable. Pay online or make check payable to California State Fair. A penalty of \$25 will be assessed if a check is refused by the bank.

PLEASE PAY AT SUBMISSION OR PROMPTLY THEREAFTER TO AVOID WITHDRAWALS ON THE LAST DAY TO RECEIVE WINES.

Entry Limitations

1. There is no limit on the number of regions, categories, or classes a winery may enter. Only one category per individual entry.
2. No entrant will be permitted to enter more than three wines of the same varietal in a single class within a single region (i.e., a maximum of three merlots, three Chardonnays, etc. per region) unless the wine is vineyard designated or a different vintage or under a different fanciful name. There is no limit to the number of single-vineyard wines an entrant may submit within a class or region.
3. No wine may be entered more than once by an entrant even if it is marketed under different labels.

Wine Label

We would like a wine label for each entry. You may download (preferred method) a bottle label at www.enofileonline.com or include one with your shipment (a photocopy is acceptable).

Entry Form

The online entry form must be complete in every detail, including retail price per bottle, exact percentage of residual sugar (Only express RS in percentage), alcohol, release date (month and year), gallons produced, vintage date, the region, class code, vineyard designation (if any), estate bottled (only if specified on the label) and the county location of the winery.

The California State Fair is not responsible for errors on entry forms or misinformation supplied by winery personnel or their designated representatives. Although we take every precaution to locate mistakes, we are not responsible for correcting errors. An incomplete entry form may be disqualified and the entry fee forfeited at the sole discretion of the California State Fair.

The State Fair may withhold awards for entries that are ineligible or have been disqualified and may recover awards that have been made for ineligible or disqualified entries that are disclosed during post-audits of Fair records. Wine may be disqualified for any errors on the entry form, including being tasted in the wrong region, varietal category, minimum amounts available for sale, etc.

Entrants may request reconsideration of a disqualification and should inform Fair management immediately, in writing, giving their name, address, complete description of the entry and the reason for requesting reconsideration. Requests will not be considered later than ninety (90) days after the entrant received notice of the disqualification. Reconsideration of a disqualification may be granted at the sole discretion of the State Fair.

Wines Remaining After Judging

Wineries or their representative may pick up any wines not receiving an award on Sunday, May 17, 2026. Wineries must notify the Wine Competition Coordinator in writing no later than Friday, May 1, 2026, of their intention to do so. (An email is an acceptable request.)

Advertising

The California State Fair reserves the right to revoke an award or disqualify an entrant from this and future competitions for any misleading advertising or

information connected to the State Fair Wine Competition or for violating any of the following rules:

1. No representation will be made that is misleading or deceptive to the trade or the consuming public.
2. No misleading advertising or labeling will be allowed with any connection to any State Fair Wine Competition award.
3. No representation will be made that states, implies, or permits the inference that wine is identical to an award winner unless this is the case.
4. If a wine is a counterpart of an award-winning wine, any reference or allusion to awards will clearly avoid creating any impression that the wine so labeled and advertised is an award winner or a counterpart thereof.
5. No entrant or representative may disparage awards of other wines to the trade or public.

Enforcement of Rules

The entry requirements, as printed herein, will be strictly enforced. Any entries found not to comply with the entry requirements will be rejected. Any entry form found to contain untrue information may result in the winery being disqualified from all awards and may also bar the winery from entering the State Fair Commercial Wine Competition in future years.

By submitting your wines online through www.enofileonline.com, an entrant certifies and promises that the information is accurate and that the entries meet all of the eligibility provisions, requirements, and limitations. It also certifies that the entrant agrees to abide by all rules and regulations of the State Fair Commercial Wine Competition.

The State Fair may, at its option, require that any wine receiving an award be certified by the Chief Judge who shall satisfy himself or herself that all entry requirements have been met, including the minimum amounts available for sale to the public.

The State Fair will check and verify the accuracy and validity of each entry. This information will be verified by authorized state representatives through selective on-site inspections on a random basis, or if there is any cause for concern by the state, by the Chief Judge, or by a California State Fair Wine Advisory Task Force member.

The State Fair may, at its option, require that any wine winning Best of Show, or other high awards be tested at a qualified lab to certify that it meets within a reasonable range the information stated on the entry form, or that it is identical to the wine that is for sale to the public.

DELIVERY & SHIPPING

Wines must arrive between Monday, March 30 and Friday, April 24, 2026. Receiving times are from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

PLEASE INSTRUCT YOUR SHIPPER TO DELIVER NO LATER THAN 4PM.

No deliveries will be accepted after 4PM or on Saturdays, Sundays or holidays.

The State Fair may refuse any entries that arrive after Friday, April 24, 2026.

The entering winery is responsible for all shipping costs of their wines. The State Fair will not accept wine on a C.O.D. basis.

Please mark multiple box shipments with box numbers and total boxes shipped (For example: Box 1 of 4, Box 2 of 4, etc.). Make sure that the wines on the entry form are the same wines you are shipping.

Shipping & Delivery

Address All wines & checks sent via courier (FedEx, UPS, etc.) to:
California State Fair
Attn: Commercial Wine Competition
Ethan and Hurley, Gate 12
Expo Center #6
1600 Exposition Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95815

Checks & Correspondence

Send via US Mail and Address to:
California State Fair
Wine Competition Coordinator
1600 Exposition Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95815

Only the Wine Competition Coordinator, Chief Judge or their designated appointee are authorized to receive entries. No other State Fairground location or State Fair representative is authorized to receive wine entries.

JUDGING

Integrity of the Competition

The California State Fair Wine Competition is double blind. Safeguards are in place to maintain the integrity of the competition, ensuring the identity of the wines being judged remains confidential.

The California State Fair Commercial Wine Competition recruits expert judges from the fields of wine education, winemaking, wine writing, wine marketing and wine service.

The California State Fair Commercial Wine Competition has a long history of embracing and celebrating the full spectrum of wines and recognizing commonly overlooked regions.

Judging Regions

All wines will be entered based on the source of the grapes (Viticultural area, County or State) used in making the wine, not the location of the winery or negociant. In order for the wine to qualify in any region, the label must designate the appellation of the grapes in accordance with TTB regulations.

However, in regions that cross viticultural areas, the wine will be entered in the geographical site of the physical winery, unless specified by the entering winery.

The broadest appellation allowed will be California. This is meant to exclude an appellation entitled American.

Classes 100 through 695 will be judged in whichever of the 11 regions, A through K that applies.

Classes 701 to 941 will only be judged under Region K.

Please use the following regional identification for each entry.

Region A - North Coast Appellations

North Coast

Humboldt County

- Willow Creek (Humboldt)

Lake County

- Benmore Valley
- Big Valley District
- Clear Lake
- Guenoc Valley
- High Valley
- Kelsey Bench
- Long Valley
- Red Hills
- Upper Lake Valley

Mendocino County

- Anderson Valley
- Cole Ranch
- Comptche
- Covelo
- Dos Rios
- Eagle Peak
- McDowell Valley
- Mendocino
- Mendocino Ridge
- Pine Mountain-Cloverdale Peak (Mendocino)
- Potter Valley
- Redwood Valley
- Yorkville Highlands

Marin County

- Petaluma Gap
- Sonoma Coast (Marin)

Solano County

- Clarksburg (Solano)
- Green Valley (Solano)
- Suisun Valley
- Wild Horse Valley (Solano)
- Winters Highlands

Trinity County

- Trinity Lakes
- Willow Creek (Trinity)

Region B - Sonoma Appellations

Sonoma County

- Alexander Valley
- Bennett Valley
- Chalk Hill
- Dry Creek Valley
- Fort Ross-Seaview
- Fountaingrove District
- Green Valley of Russian River Valley
- Knights Valley
- Los Carneros (Sonoma)
- Moon Mountain District
- Northern Sonoma
- Petaluma Gap
- Pine Mountain-Cloverdale Peak (Sonoma)
- Rockpile
- Russian River Valley
- Sonoma Coast (Sonoma)
- Sonoma Mountain
- Sonoma Valley
- West Sonoma Coast

Region C - Napa Appellations

Napa County

- Atlas Peak
- Calistoga
- Chiles Valley
- Coombsville
- Crystal Springs
- Diamond Mountain District
- Howell Mountain
- Los Carneros (Napa)
- Mt. Veeder
- Napa Valley
- Oak Knoll District
- Oakville
- Rutherford
- Spring Mountain District

- St Helena
- Stags Leap District
- Wild Horse Valley (Napa)
- Yountville

Region D - Greater Bay Appellations

Central Coast

San Francisco Bay

Alameda County

- Livermore Valley
- San Francisco Bay
- Santa Clara Valley

Contra Costa County

- Contra Costa
- Lamorinda
- San Francisco Bay

San Francisco County

- San Francisco Bay

San Mateo County

- Santa Cruz Mountains
- San Francisco Bay

Santa Clara County

- San Francisco Bay
- San Ysidro District
- Santa Clara Valley
- Santa Cruz Mountains

Santa Cruz County

- Ben Lomond Mountain
- Santa Cruz Mountains

Region E - North-Central Coast Appellations

Central Coast

Monterey County

- Arroyo Seco
- Carmel Valley
- Chalone (Monterey)
- Gabilan Mountains
- Hames Valley

- Monterey
- San Antonio Valley
- San Bernabe
- San Lucas
- Santa Lucia Highlands

San Benito County

- Chalone (San Benito)
- Cienega Valley
- Gabilan Mountains
- Lime Kiln Valley
- Mt. Harlan
- Pacheco Pass
- Paicines
- San Benito
- San Francisco Bay
- Santa Clara Valley

Region F - South-Central Coast Appellations

Central Coast

San Luis Obispo County

- Adelaida District
- Alisos Canyon
- Arroyo Grande Valley
- Creston District
- Edna Valley
- El Pomar District
- Paso Robles
- Paso Robles Estrella District
- Paso Robles Geneseo District
- Paso Robles Highlands District
- Paso Robles Willow Creek District
- San Juan Creek
- San Luis Obispo Coast
- San Miguel District
- Santa Margarita Ranch
- Santa Maria Valley (San Luis Obispo)
- Templeton Gap District
- York Mountain

Santa Barbara County

- Alisos Canyon
- Ballard Canyon
- Happy Canyon of Santa Barbara
- Los Olivos District
- Santa Maria Valley (Santa Barbara)
- Santa Rita Hills
- Santa Ynez Valley

Region G - South Coast Appellations

South Coast

Los Angeles County

- Antelope Valley of the California High Desert (Los Angeles)
- Leona Valley
- Malibu Coast
- Malibu - Newton Canyon
- Palos Verde Peninsula
- Saddle Rock-Malibu
- Sierra Pelona Valley

Orange County

Riverside County

- Temecula Valley
- Cucamonga Valley (Riverside)

San Bernardino County

- Cucamonga Valley (San Bernardino)
- Yucaipa Valley

San Diego County

- Ramona Valley
- San Pasqual Valley

Ventura County

- Malibu Coast

Region H - Sierra Foothills Appellations

Sierra Foothills

Amador County

- California Shenandoah Valley (Amador)
- Fiddletown

Calaveras County

El Dorado County

- California Shenandoah Valley (El Dorado)
- El Dorado
- Fair Play

Mariposa County

Nevada County

Placer County

Tuolumne County

Yuba County

- North Yuba

Region I - Lodi Appellation

Sacramento County

- Alta Mesa
- Borden Ranch
- Clarksburg (Sacramento)
- Cosumnes River (Sacramento)
- Jahant (Sacramento)
- Lodi (Sacramento)
- Sloughouse

San Joaquin County

- Borden Ranch
- Clements Hills
- Cosumnes River (San Joaquin)
- Jahant (San Joaquin)
- Lodi (San Joaquin)
- Mokelumne River
- River Junction (San Joaquin)
- Tracy Hills

Region J - Other California Appellations

Excluding California (State)
Appellation

Butte County

Colusa County

Fresno County

- Madera (Fresno)
- Squaw Valley- Miramonte

Glenn County

Kern County

- Antelope Valley of the California High Desert (Kern)
- Tehachapi - Cummings Valley

Kings County

Madera County

- Madera (Madera)

Merced County

Shasta County

- Inwood Valley
- Manton Valley

Siskiyou County

- Seiad Valley

Stanislaus County

- Diablo Grande
- Paulsell Valley
- River Junction (Stanislaus)
- Salado Creek
- Tracy Hills

Sutter County

Tehama County

- Manton Valley

Tulare County

Yolo County

- Capay Valley
- Clarksburg (Yolo)
- Dunnigan Hills
- Merrit Island
- Winters Highlands

Region K - California (State) Appellation

All classes that are appropriate will be judged in Region K. Classes 701 to 941 will only be judged in Region K. All other approved counties and viticultural areas not listed above will also be judged in Region K.

GUIDELINES FOR CATEGORIES

Micro Wineries

The California State Fair understands that there are many small or micro-wineries in California producing incredible wines that are unable to reach the larger marketplace.

These Micro-Winery classes are meant to include them in the competition.

To qualify as a micro-winery, a winery must make less than 2,526 9L cases (approximately 6,000 gallons) of wine in one season.

AND

Less than 1,052 9L cases (approximately 2,500 gallons) of the entered wine.

Micro Winery Class Codes:

- 195 Micro Winery White Wines
- 295 Micro Winery Red Wines
- 695 Micro Winery All Other Wines

Wines entered in these classes will be eligible for Double Gold, Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals, and for Best Micro Winery Red, White and Other. Wines will not be eligible for Best of Region or Best of California.

Micro Winery entries must follow all the rules of the California State Fair Commercial Wine Competition except for the following:

3. Wineries need only send (3) 750 ml bottles or (4) 375 ml bottles of the entered wine.
4. Micro Wineries need not meet the Minimum Production Requirement.
5. No minimum amount of wine needs to be reserved for sale to the public
6. Micro Wineries need not reserve 10 cases of Gold medal winning wine to be purchased by the State Fair's representative to pour during the California State Fair.

Any winery qualifying as a Micro Winery is free to enter any larger classifications it feels appropriate, but will then be subject to all of the minimum production and sales requirements.

Sweetness (Still Wines)

For entries customarily made in a wide range of sweetness styles – Riesling, Gewurztraminer, Viognier, Moscato - Winemakers should enter their wines in the classes which most accurately represent the residual sugar (r.s.) levels as stated in the class description.

The State Fair also asks winemakers to use their discretion in choosing the fairest and most appropriate class regarding the level of sweetness of Table Wine varietals and blends.

Sparkling wine categories include specific residual sugar levels.

Varietal Blends

The following requirements apply to classes 170, 172, 260, 262, 264, 266, 305 and 676:

1. Wines entered into any of these categories must have the grape varieties or an acceptable alternative term stated on the label or entry form (such as Meritage, Claret, Bordeaux style, Rhone, Italian, etc.).

The following requirements apply to classes 174, 266, 305 and 676:

1. Wines without grape varieties or acceptable alternative listed on the label or entry form must be entered under categories that state “Other Varietal Blend”.
2. Listing of the grape varieties on the entry form but not on the label is acceptable.
3. For classes 170, 172, 260, 262 and 264, entries must be made from at least two of the grape varietals in each category (see specific classes for lists of varietals).

Categories

1. Classes 701 to 941 will all be judged in Region K, California State Appellation, and wines in these classes will be eligible for Double Gold, Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals, but will not be eligible for Best of Region, Best of California or Best of Show awards. These wines are not required to meet minimum production or minimum availability requirements. Only three 750 ml bottles or four 375 ml bottles are required for entry.
2. The Chief Judge reserves the right to combine classes when the number of entries warrants, or to divide classes if the range of sweetness or other factors warrants.

CATEGORIES & CLASSES

DRY WHITE WINES

- 100 Chardonnay
- 110 Sauvignon Blanc/Fume Blanc
- 115 Semillon (includes Chevrier)
- 120 Pinot Blanc
- 122 Roussanne
- 125 Viognier, Dry 0 - .90% rs
- 126 Viognier, Medium Dry .91 - 2% rs
- 127 Pinot Gris, Pinot Grigio
- 130 Chenin Blanc, Dry
- 135 Albariño
- 140 Gewurztraminer, Dry 0 - .90% rs
- 141 Gewurztraminer, Medium Dry .91 - 2.% rs
- 150 Riesling, Dry 0-.90% rs
- 151 Riesling, Medium Dry .91 - 2.0% rs
- 155 Muscat, Dry 0 - .90% rs
- 156 Muscat, Medium Dry .91 - 2.% rs
- 160 Other white varietals not otherwise listed, Dry 0 - .90% rs
- 161 Other white varietals not otherwise listed, Medium - Dry .91 - 2.0% rs
- 170 Bordeaux White Varietal Blends (including Meritage): Must include two or more of the following varietals: Colombard, Merlot Blanc, Muscadelle, Sauvignon Blanc, Sauvignon Vert, Semillon, Ugni Blanc (may include up to 10% other varietals for blending purpose)
- 172 Rhone White Varietal Blends: Must include two or more of the following varietals: Aligote, Bourboulenc, Clairette Blanche, Grenache Blanc, Marsanne, Picordan, Picpoul Blanc, Rolle, Roussanne, Ugni Blanc, Viognier

(may include up to 10% of total volume other varietals for blending purpose)

- 174 Other Dry White Varietal Blends

RED TABLE WINES

- 210 Pinot Noir
- 213 Primitivo
- 215 Zinfandel
- 218 Malbec
- 220 Merlot
- 222 Cabernet Franc
- 224 Cabernet Sauvignon
- 230 Sangiovese
- 232 Carignan
- 234 Mourvedre/Mataro
- 236 Tempranillo
- 238 Barbera
- 240 Petite Sirah
- 242 Syrah/Shiraz
- 244 Grenache
- 250 Other Red Varietals (not listed above and not blends)
- 260 Bordeaux Red Varietal Blends (including Meritage): Must include two or more of the following varietals: Bequignol, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenere, Malbec, Merlot, Petit Verdot, Prolongeau (may include up to 10% of total volume other varietals for blending purpose)
- 262 Rhone Red Varietal Blends: Must include two or more of the following varietals: Carignan, Cinsault, Counoise,

- Grenache Noir, Mourvedre, Muscardin, Petite Sirah, Picpoul Noir, Syrah, Terret Noir, Vacciarese (may include up to 10% of total volume other varietals for blending purpose)
- 264 Italian Red Varietal Blends: Must include two or more Italian varietals OR at least 50% of one of the Italian varietals: Aglianico, Barbera, Carignan, Dolcetto, Freisa, Grignolino, Lagrien, Montepulciano, Nebbiolo, Primitivo, Refosco, Sangiovese, Teroldego, Zinfandel or other Italian varietals.
- 266 Other Red Varietal Blends

ROSE & BLUSH WINES

- 300 Varietal Rosé, or Blush
- 305 Varietal Rosé or Blush Blends
- 330 White Zinfandel

SPARKLING WINES

- 400 Charmat Fermented Sparkling wine (Blanc de Blancs, Blanc de Noirs, etc.)
- 400a Natural, no dosage
- 400b Brut, up to 1.5% rs
- 400c Extra Dry, 1.51 to 3% rs
- 400d Sweet, 3.1% and above rs
- Rosé, Pink, & Sparkling Red
- 400e Natural, no dosage
- 400f Brut, up to 1.5% rs
- 400g Extra Dry, 1.51 to 3% rs
- 400h Sweet, 3.1% and above rs
- 400i Charmat Fermented Rose Pink and Sparkling Red - extra dry 1.51 - 3% rs with fruit flavor
- 400j Charmat Fermented Sparkling Wine - sweet 3.1 and above rs with fruit flavor
- 450 Bottle Fermented Sparkling wine (Blanc de Blancs, Blanc de Noirs, etc.)

- 450a Natural, no dosage
- 450b Brut, up to 1.5% rs
- 450c Extra Dry, 1.51 to 3% rs
- 450d Sweet, 3.1% and above rs
- Rosé, Pink, and Sparkling Red
- 450e Natural, no dosage
- 450f Brut, up to 1.5% rs
- 450g Extra Dry, 1.51 to 3% rs
- 450h Sweet, 3.1% and above rs

FORTIFIED & NON-FORTIFIED DESSERT WINES

- 500 Traditional (requiring Portuguese varieties and brandy addition to arrest fermentation)
- 500a Vintage dated
- 500b Non-Vintage dated
- 510 Sherry
- 510a Sherry, dry
- 510b Sherry, medium
- 510c Sherry, sweet
- 520 Non-Traditional
- 520a Varietal fortified dessert wine (specific grape or grapes named)
- 520b Flavored fortified dessert wine
- 520c Other Misc. fortified dessert wine
- 530 Natural Non-fortified dessert and sweet red wines (includes Late Harvest)

SWEET WHITE WINES

- 610 Chenin Blanc, Sweet
- 615 Viognier, Medium Sweet 2.1-4% rs
- 616 Viognier, Sweet/Late-Harvest $\geq 4.1\%$ rs
- 620 Riesling, Medium Sweet 2.1-4% rs
- 630 Riesling, Sweet/Late-Harvest $\geq 4.1\%$ rs
- 640 Gewurztraminer, Medium Sweet 2.1 - 4% rs
- 650 Gewurztraminer, Sweet/Late-Harvest $\geq 4.1\%$ rs

- 660 Muscat, Medium Sweet 2.1-4% rs
- 661 Muscat, Sweet/Late-Harvest $\geq 4.1\%$ rs
- 670 Semillon or Sauvignon Blanc or Blends (including Late Harvest)
- 672 Other White Varietals not otherwise listed, Medium Sweet 2.1 - 4% rs
- 674 Other White Varietals not otherwise listed, Sweet/Late-Harvest $\geq 4.1\%$ rs
- 676 Other White Varietal Blends - Medium Sweet
- 678 Other White Varietal Blends - Sweet

Other Classes (701 to 941)
 These wines will all be judged in Region K, California State Appellation, and will be eligible for Double Gold, Gold, Silver and Bronze medals, but will not be eligible for Best of Class, Best of Region, Best of California or Best of Show awards. Only three 750 ml bottles or four 375 ml bottles are required for entry.

CALIFORNIA BRANDIES

- 701 Straight (Unrectified)
- 702 Blended (Rectified)
- 703 Grappa, Marc and/or Immature Brandy
- 704 Alambic Brandy (may be rectified)
- 705 Fruit Brandies or Eau de Vie



LOW ALCOHOL WINES (0.5 TO 7 % ALCOHOL)

- 901 White
- 902 Rosé or Blush
- 903 Sparkling
- 904 Red

DE-ALCOHOLIZED WINES (BELOW 0.5 % ALCOHOL)

- 910 White
- 911 Rosé or Blush
- 912 Sparkling
- 913 Red

FRUIT & BERRY WINES

- 924 Berry Wines
- 925 Fortified Fruit Wines
- 926 Grape Wine with Fruit Juice or Flavor, including Sangria
- 927 Honey Wines (Meads)

VERMOUTH & OTHER FLAVORED WINES

- 940 Vermouth (Sweet, Dry, White, Red)
- 941 Other flavored Wines

MICRO WINERY WINES

(see guide on pages 19 for qualifications)

- 195 Micro Winery White Wines
- 295 Micro Winery Red Wines
- 695 Micro Winery All Other Wines

Wines entered in these classes will be eligible for Double Gold, Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals, and for Best Micro Winery Red, White and Other. Wines will not be eligible for Best of Region or Best of California.

AWARDS

Awards Offered in Each Class

Awards will be given to winners within each varietal or style. The Double Gold award is reserved for wines receiving a unanimous vote for Gold by a panel of judges.

Also, wines will be given the following numeric scores in the following ranges:

Double Gold Award	98-100 points
Gold Award	94-97 points
Silver Award	88-93 points
Bronze Award	83-87 points

Should you be awarded a Double Gold, Gold, Silver, and/or Bronze award for your entries, you may choose any of the following forms of recognition:

OPTION 1: You may order the traditional award ribbon/rosette for the award your entry received. One award per entry.

(There is no charge for this award.)

OPTION 2: Choose an electronic version of an award-winning medal to use for digital marketing. The link will be included in the Enofile awards letter as well as the Cal Expo website.

(There is no charge for this award.)

OPTION 3: You may purchase award stickers at a nominal cost for application to your product.

IMPORTANT, PLEASE NOTE:

Following the competition, you will receive an award letter with an order form attached.

If you want a physical or digital award you must submit this order form by the date indicated on the email. Requested Awards will be mailed in August.

Award Seals

The California State Fair will make official award seals in the form of stickers available to purchase for any award-winning wines. These award stickers may be affixed only to bottles of State Fair award-winning wines. Only official Fair award seals/stickers are authorized to designate California State Fair award-winning wines.

Awards To Be Presented

Best of Show Red	Rosette and Large Golden Bear Trophy
Best of Show White	Rosette and Large Golden Bear Trophy
Best of Show Sparkling Wine.....	Rosette and Large Golden Bear Trophy
Best of Show Pink Wine	Rosette and Large Golden Bear Trophy
Best of Show Dessert Wine	Rosette and Large Golden Bear Trophy
Golden State Winery of the Year Award	Large Golden Bear Trophy
Best Micro Winery Red Wine	Rosette and Small Golden Bear Trophy
Best Micro Winery White Wine	Rosette and Small Golden Bear Trophy
Best Micro Winery Other Wine	Rosette and Small Golden Bear Trophy
Best Value Wine	Rosette and Plaque
Best of Region.....	Rosette and Plaque
Best of California.....	Rosette and Plaque

Best of Show

A Best of Show Red, White, Pink, Dessert, and Sparkling Wine will be chosen. Best of Show is the highest award given by the State Fair Commercial Wine Competition. The acclamation method will be used to determine the Best of Show wines. No matter how many wines are in a round, each judge may vote for as many or as few wines as he or she wants. The winning wine is the entry receiving the most votes.

Golden State Winery of the Year

The Golden State Winery of the Year Award is given to the winery that demonstrates consistent excellence based on the number, quality, and percentage of award-winning wines. At least ten wines must be entered by a winery to be eligible for this award, which will be based on a combination of these calculations.

Part 1: The number and rank of Double Gold, Gold, Silver, Bronze, Best of California, Best of Region and Best of Show awards won by the winery's top 10 scoring wines.

Part 2: The percentage of entered wines by a winery that wins awards.

For the purposes of this award, a winery is defined as a single wine brand, or a label consumers recognize as a single producer. Any requests for clarification of this classification will be addressed by the Chief Judge and the Competition Coordinator.

Best of Region

Judges will be divided into panels, each tasting the qualified wines from one of the 11 regions. Judges will vote to choose a Best of Region Red Wine and Best of Region White Wine. Judges will not know which region they are judging.

Best of California

All qualified varietals and styles will compete for the Best of California awards. These categories are subject to change each year based on the sole discretion of the Chief Judge, who will consider, among other factors, the number of wines entered in each class. A class must have a minimum of 25 entries.

Best Value Wine

The Best Value Wine Award is given to the wine that wins the highest award for the most value-priced wine in relation to other wines priced in that category. Example: A \$10 Meritage winning a Double Gold and Best of California award, having been judged against all other Bordeaux Blends ranging as high as \$75 and averaging over \$40, would receive the Best Value Wine Award.

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2026 GENERAL RULES

CLICK LINK OR SCAN QR CODE TO VIEW GENERAL RULES ONLINE:

<https://castatefair.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2026-General-Rules.pdf>

