



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Michigan Wine Collaborative Announce Results of the 2026 Taste Michigan Governor's Cup Wine Competition

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The [Michigan Wine Collaborative \(MWC\)](#) is excited to announce the 2026 Taste Michigan Governor's Cup Competition results. This event represents Michigan's only statewide industry driven wine competition and is an opportunity for the Michigan wine industry to unite, engage, compete, and celebrate the premium wines representative of our wine industry.

Partnering with the [Beverage Testing Institute \(BevTest\)](#) for the official fourth annual Taste Michigan Governor's Cup Awards in 2026, MWC is thrilled to celebrate the exciting results from the competition.

The Michigan Governor's Cup winner for 2026 is [French Valley Vineyard, of the Leelanau Peninsula AVA with their, 2024 Dessert Riesling](#). This wine scored 97 points and ranked the highest out of 214 entries from 44 wineries submitted to the competition.

In 2026, two new awards within the competition were launched. They included Best Winemaker (Most diverse and distinctive set of five-or-more 90+ point scoring wines) and Winery of the Year (Highest average score with a 5 wine minimum submission). We are excited to announce those awardees as:

Winery of the Year: Stoney Ridge Vineyards

Winemaker of the Year: Blake Loughheed at Bel Lago Ventures (*Bel Lago, French Valley Vineyard, Dune Bird*)

Finally, we are pleased to announce the following award categories and corresponding 'Best of Category' awards:

Fortified: French Valley Vineyard 2024 Dessert Wine Riesling (Platinum Medal);
Governor's Cup Winner

Vinifera Red: Cherry Creek Cellars NV Charamar Collection Proprietors Reserve Red Blend (Platinum Medal)

Vinifera White: Blustone Vineyards 2025 Chardonnay (Gold Medal)

Hybrid Red: Stoney Ridge Vineyards 2021 Petite Pearl (Gold Medal)



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Hybrid White: Social Vines 2023 Vignoles (Gold Medal)

Sparkling: Mawby Sparkling NV Blanc Brut (Gold Medal)

Rosé: Verterra Winery 2025 Estate Rose, Cabernet Franc (Gold Medal)

Sweet/Dessert (R.S. ≥5%): Nitz Reserve 2022 Ice Wine, Vidal Blanc (Platinum Medal)

Fruit Wine: Bel Lago NV Cherry Wine (Gold Medal)

Specialty Wine: Laurentide 2024 Risque Rose (Gold Medal)

Additionally, the Governor's Case Winners (top 5 red, top 5 white, top sparkling, top rosé) include:

Cherry Creek Cellars NV Charamar Collection Proprietors Reserve Red Blend

Stoney Ridge Vineyards 2021 Petite Pearl

St. Julian Winery Braganini 2022 Cabernet Franc

White Pine 2022 Reserve Cabernet Franc

Dune Bird NV Cabernet Franc

Blustone Vineyards 2025 Chardonnay

Social Vines 2023 Vignoles

Filkins Vineyards 2024 Riesling

Crane's Winery 2024 Gruner Veltliner

Chateau Fontaine 2024 Estate Sauvignon Blanc

Verterra Winery 2025 Estate Rosé of Cabernet Franc

Mawby Sparkling NV Blanc Brut

Wineries and wines with their medal ranks are now listed on the [Taste Michigan website](#).

In partnership with [Taste Michigan brand](#), MWC will be coordinating events and promotional opportunities for the winning wines of the competition including a prestigious award ceremony later this year where we will gather to transfer the Taste Michigan Governor's Cup Trophy from Cherry Creek Cellars to French Valley Vineyard. The official trophy will be housed at the 2026 Best in Show winner tasting room for one year. This physical award is becoming an iconic part of tasting rooms around the state for the wine industry and consumers alike.

About the Michigan Wine Collaborative

The Michigan Wine Collaborative unites wineries, growers, suppliers, educators, and partners to strengthen Michigan's wine industry through advocacy, education, networking, and shared resources. Its mission is to enhance the sustainability and profitability of the Michigan wine community now and for generations to come.

About Taste Michigan

Taste Michigan is a statewide initiative developed by the Michigan Wine Collaborative to increase awareness and demand for wines produced from Michigan-grown grapes. Through consumer events, trade engagement, educational programming, and collaborative marketing campaigns, Taste Michigan works to highlight the diversity, quality, and regional



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identity of Michigan wine while strengthening connections between wineries, restaurants, retailers, and consumers.

For more information, contact us by reaching out to info@michiganwinecollaborative.com or send us a message on social media.

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