

The San Diego International Wine Competition

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WINNING WINES

By Robert Whitley
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Wine competitions are now a fact of life throughout the United States. There are more than 60 that I am aware of, and probably a few dozen more that are flying under the radar. Wineries have a singular purpose when they enter a wine into a commercial wine competition: They want to win a significant award to boost sales.

The power of the award derives, of course, from that fact that unbiased wine professionals tasting blind (meaning they don't know the identity of the wine being evaluated, thus removing any possibility of collusion) have deemed a wine worthy of some measure of acclaim.

Wines at the San Diego International are evaluated by three-judge panels and awarded silver or gold medals if they display exceptional character. At the discretion of each panel, the best of the gold-medal wines in each class are sent forward to the championship rounds of tasting, where awards are given for best of class and ultimately best of show.

All wines advancing to the championship rounds are automatically elevated to platinum status. As Director, I and Chief Judge Michael Franz taste every platinum wine as it is submitted for the next round of tasting.

This week's Wine Talk tasting notes are dedicated to a selection of red wines that impressed me in the championship round. Due to space considerations, not all of the platinum-award red wines are reviewed this week, but you can expect to see many of them pop up in future columns.

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TASTING NOTES

Wines are rated on a 100-point scale for outstanding quality or value and enthusiasm for the recommen-

Parallel 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon
black-fruit aromas with mass

Platinum



PARALLEL

96 Points

2009 Cabernet Sauvignon, Black Diamonds, Napa Valley (\$125)

Layered, rich black-fruit aromas with massive structure, yet exquisite balance.

Online

experience as a wine critic as well as a Publisher of Wine Review Online. 10 million visitors annually

also contributes a column for the Wine Review Online. and has judged

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