



Press release

Zurich-Sierre, May 17, 2017

## Winner of Mondial du Merlot & Assemblages 2017 winner is from Ticino

### Second Festival of Award-Winning Merlots held in Zurich

**The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the Mondial du Merlot & Assemblages maintained its international profile with over 450 entries (an increase of 10%) from 22 countries. The only Great Gold medal was awarded to a Merlot from Ticino, with wines from France and Italy (the two countries with the most entries after Switzerland) also winning gold medals. These great wines will be presented to the public during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Festival of Merlots in Zurich.**

Founded in Ticino in 2008, the Mondial du Merlot & Assemblages was taken over in 2011 by VINEA, the association which was already organising the Mondial des Pinots. Sponsored by the OIV, UIOE and the USOE and a member of VINFOED, this competition gave this year's 235 producers-entrants from around the world the chance to present 450 wines across several categories. The competition is completely computerised and the 25 judges used tablets to score the wines, making the judging process exceptionally smooth and efficient.

### Paolo Basso president of the competition

The judging panel of 25 international tasters (oenologists, sommeliers and wine journalists) was overseen by Paolo Basso, World's Best Sommelier 2013 and president of the competition, who declared himself impressed by the Merlots tasted: "Once again the Mondial du Merlot competition has amply demonstrated the progression in quality of this magnificent grape which is successfully grown worldwide. Its roundness, distinguished character, class and potential were revealed by the various entries from many different countries. The 2015 vintage in particular showed a richness and ageing potential which will please wine lovers and experts alike. It gave the producers a unique opportunity to compete against each other, in a market that continually encourages them to raise their game.

### Medals and special prizes

The list of award-winners features Merlot wines from different production regions. Of the 50 Gold medals, 36 were awarded to Swiss producers (16 from Ticino, 10 from Valais, 8 from Vaud and 1 from Grisons and Fribourg). For non-Swiss wines, Italy and France triumphed with 5 and 3 Gold medals respectively, followed by Spain, Slovenia, Portugal, Uruguay and New Zealand.

Several special prizes were awarded, including the Best Wine of the Competition and Best Swiss Varietal Merlot which was given to Swiss winery Piccola Vigna from Coldrerio (Ticino), also a Grand Gold medal winner. The Gran Maestro prize went to Gregor Kuonen of Caveau de Salquenen (Valais Suisse) who achieved the best overall score for three vintages (2013-2014-2015). The prize for the Older Vintages category was won by the 2008 Slovenian Merlot of Carolina Jakoncic (Dobrovo). The Best Foreign Varietal Merlot prize was awarded to Viñedos y Crianzas (Alto Aragón, Spain) and the Organic Prize went to Château la Vieille Chapelle (Bordeaux). Ticino producer Vini e Distillati Angelo Delea SA (Losone) won three prizes, namely Best Rosé or Blanc de Noir, Best Blend and the Vinofed Prize.

89 other wines won silver medals, and a total of 140 wines won awards in line with OIV regulations.

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10<sup>e</sup> édition

## Festival of Award-Winning Merlots: bringing together prize-winning producers and the general public

This Zurich showcase for award-winning wines was held for the second time at the request of the producers who wish to present their products at the very centre of the most important Swiss markets.

For wine trade member Rafael Perez Latorre of Oenothek Santé (Zurich), "this event gives us an ideal opportunity to taste and appreciate the Merlot grape variety in all its diversity." His sentiments were shared by young award-winning oenologist Cristina Monico of Cantina Moncucchetto (Lugano), who added: "this event helps me make new contacts in Zurich, as well as developing my existing relationships."

A selection of Swiss AOP and IGP cheeses will be offered to visitors to accompany the outstanding wines poured by the prize winners. The two seminars presenting a selection of award-winning Merlots from the 2017 competition have been met with great enthusiasm and are now sold out.

The Festival of Award-Winning Merlots will be held today from 2.30 pm – 7.30 pm at the Widder Hotel, Rennweg 8, Zurich. Registration is still open via this link: [www.mondial-du-merlot.com](http://www.mondial-du-merlot.com)

**The results of the competition are available on the website [www.mondial-du-merlot.com](http://www.mondial-du-merlot.com).**

For further information:

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***VINEA is a multidisciplinary association specialised in the organisation of wine competitions, including the Grand Prix du Vin Suisse, the Mondial des Pinots and the Mondial du Merlot et Assemblages, but also in the organisation of events and initiatives designed to promote Swiss wines, such as the Salon des Vins Suisses (Swiss Wine Show) and the Semaine du Vin Suisse (Swiss Wine Week), as well as the Swiss Wines app. For further information, see [www.vinea.ch](http://www.vinea.ch)***

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