



# Concours Mondial



# Press Kit

**CONCOURS MONDIAL DE BRUXELLES 2008**  
**Bordeaux Aquitaine, 18-19-20/04**

## Objectives

The aim of the Concours Mondial is to offer optimal conditions for tasting wines and spirits from the four corners of the world, and to award the top-class products among them.

While constituting a window on the latest tendencies (as regards year, type of vine, country, etc), the Concours Mondial offers to producers and to traders the occasion to see, at the end of a rigorous process of selection, the excellence of their product awarded on an international scale by a Large Gold Medal, a Gold medal or a Silver medal.

Consequently, this makes it possible to guide the consumer through the huge choice that the market offers, by providing a label, a criterion of selection and confidence, decreed by professional tasters of international reputation.



## HISTORY

### *A success story since 1994*

Created on impulse by Louis Havaux, current president of the FIJEV (International Federation of Journalists and Wine Writers), the Concours Mondial de Bruxelles was held for the very first time in April 1994 in... Bruges! If 'only' 861 samples were then recorded (an exploit in itself considering that they were gathered in 2 months), the international dimension, with 29 participating countries, was set to continue.

Just like the success, if one considers this laudatory comment by Ezio Rivella, President of the Jury of this first Contest, Past-president of the International Union of Oenologists and Committee of Denominazione di Origine di Italy: *'I can affirm, without a doubt, that the Concours Mondial de Bruxelles has, since its first edition, become one of the foremost authorities among the best international competitions which can be counted on the fingers of one hand.'*

The Concours Mondial quickly reached cruising speed and consequently, success grew with each edition. In 1999 it was joined by the Brussels Spirits Award, a 'little brother' reserved for spirits, brandies and other fruit wines.

In 2006, the Concours Mondial de Bruxelles decided to affirm its international character by going beyond its borders. The organizing committee chose Lisbon for this première occasion. Maastricht followed in 2007.

In 2008, the Concours Mondial will take place in Bordeaux, in the heart of vineyards among the most prestigious of the world.

In spite of these peregrinations, Concours Mondial de Bruxelles kept his 'AOC' and the reference to Brussels, capital-city of Europe.



## DEVELOPEMENT OF TASTINGS

*Nothing's left to chance...*

In practice, the tastings take place during three mornings, from 08:30 am to 12:30 am. The jury is composed of around forty<sup>2</sup> groups of five to six tasters. One of these groups is reserved for fortified wines (Porto, Jerez, Madera, etc.) and three others are dedicated to spirits, liquors, brandies and fruit wines.

All is implemented to guarantee optimal conditions: luminosity, hygrometry and ambient temperature (from 18 to 22°C) strictly controlled, a cathedral silence in the tasting rooms, irreproachable glasses and service, constant monitoring of the refrigerators for the serving of wines at the adequate temperature, etc.

Each tasting is preceded by a palate-calibration aimed at harmonizing and gauging the ratings of the tasters. The calibration of the first day is collective and is the subject of a general debate. The calibration of the 2nd and 3rd days are carried out and directed by the president appointed within each group.

The samples to be tasted are gathered within homogeneous series, based on the characteristics declared by the producer and the certificates of analyses, after control of the exactitude of the inscriptions in each category. The series will be drawn up sometimes:

- according to encephagement, characteristics of the product: 'still wines of red vines: Merlot', 'white sparkling wines of aromatic vines', 'dry rosy wines containing less than 4 reducing sugar gr/l', etc
- according to geographical origin: 'red wines of Bordeaux', 'sparkling appellation wines: Asti Spumante, etc

Each group is allotted a listing from 4 to 6 series which will be tasted in the order defined by the organisation, with a maximum of 50 samples per morning.

All the series of wines proposed in the tastings to the international jury are obviously blind-tasted. The organization of the Contest guarantees the total anonymity of the samples both on the label and bottle shape level; the only detail revealed to the tasters being the year.

The products are tasted in line and noted following the evaluation sheet developed by the technical direction of the Concours Mondial based on the model suggested by the OIV and the International Union of Oenologists.

One finds criteria relating to these aspects:

- visual : clearness, aspect and, where necessary, effervescence
- olfactory : intensity, openness and quality
- gustatory: intensity, openness, quality and persistence

The ratings of each criterion will determine in a balanced way the total note for each sample. A wine defined as "excellent" for the whole of the criteria will be allotted a maximum rating of 100 points.

After each sample, the evaluation sheets are given to the president of the group who is charged with checking them and keeping the group concordant.

Overall, the role of the group president is to carefully manage the course of the tastings.

He/she will impose the rhythm and will be charged with ensuring certain coherence in the attribution of the ratings within the commission. He/she will not influence in any manner, the judgement of the tasters but will take care to guide the members of the group in a neutral and objective way.

Moreover, the president takes care of the secrecy concerning the absolute anonymity of the wines and can, in virtue of their discretionary capacity, order a second tasting of a sample if considered necessary useful.

At the end of a series, all of the cards are collected by the members of the organization for an ultimate control before treatment of the results by scanning and statistical analysis.



### The Jury

For the 2008 event, the jury will be composed of around 240 experts originating from about 45 different countries. It is preferable to respect a geographical dispersion of the origins of the judges: the organization will take care that in each commission, each judge represents a different country. The Concours Mondial has long since distinguished itself on the international scene by this singular diversity.

Engineer-oenologists, reputed wine waiters, specialized journalists, international purchasers or influential representatives of the wine sector: the tasters are all, in addition, professionals, rigorously selected for their great competence and whose qualities of tasters could not be lacking.



## STATISTICAL TREATMENT

### *A World first*

Leader among international contests, the Concours Mondial de Bruxelles is a forerunner in the field of sensory evaluation in order to guarantee to the producers a maximum of rigour, effectiveness and equity in the attribution of medals.

Thus, for several years, the Concours Mondial has collaborated with the Statistical Institute of the University of Louvain to analyze and optimize the reliability of the results by identifying some principal distortions (excessive variability between different juries, repeatability, reproducibility, etc) A procedure of standardization makes it possible to achieve this goal while preserving diversity and the appreciation of the experts.

It can be that in certain contests the mellow wines are particularly favoured in sensory analysis and thus too highly rated compared to the dry still wines. Contrarily, the sparkling wines can be slightly underprivileged. A separation of these three types of samples was installed successfully by the Concours and made it possible to eliminate these differences.

It has also been shown at the time of preliminary studies that certain tasters or certain commissions allotted coherent marks but that the scale of these marks could be appreciably different from one individual to another. For a taster 'lambda', a mark of 86% corresponds to a sample of very great value.

This taster allotted for the wines presented, marks oscillating between 50 and 88%. Another taster will judge in a more generous way and will note an excellent sample with a mark of 98%; their scale of judgement oscillating between 65 and 100%. The statistical formula of treatment limits the differences between the marks allotted by the most severe or lax tasters, or while bringing back all the marks to the same scale.

The Concours Mondial de Bruxelles gives thus - and this, in the greatest transparency, the same chance to all the participating samples. Provided they are of an irreproachable quality. The awarded wines are the best witnesses...

All this without, and this is most important, without introducing new distortions.



### *The medals, international recognition*

At the end of the tastings, each sample is allotted a mark out of a hundred resulting from the application of the formula of computation accredited by the Statistical Institute of the Catholic University of Louvain. Only those having obtained the best scores will be able to aspire to an invaluable Medal.

- Grande Médaille d'Or : from 96 to 100%
- Médaille d'Or : from 87 to 95,9%
- Médaille d'Argent : from 82,5 to 86,9%

The sum of the allotted medals cannot however exceed 30% of the total of the samples presented at the Concours : on the assumption of excess, the samples having obtained the worse results are eliminated.

As for the 'Best Wines' trophies they will be awarded to the products having obtained the highest score in the following categories (in addition to their Medal of course):

- 'Best White Wine' for still white wines
- 'Best Red Wine' for still red wines
- 'Best Sparkling Wine' for sparkling wines
- 'Best Sweet Wine' for sweet wines

### *'Exotic' beverages*

If the 'big three' (France, Spain and Italy) remain at the top of the participation ranking, we can hail the good progression of countries like Chile or South Africa, but also the presence of some 'exotic' wines and spirits : India, Colombia, Taiwan... Originality also in Europe, with samples coming from Belgium, Netherlands or San Marino.

## THE CONCOURS MONDIAL

### *In numbers...*

34 000	Evaluation sheets
23 200	Bottles
6190	Samples announced for 2008
5732	Participants at the last edition
4500	Litres of tasted wine
2000	Crystal glasses, washed 3 times a day
1994	The year the Concours Mondial de Bruxelles was founded
1640	Medals awarded in 2007
1100	Litres of mineral water drunk during the tastings
456	Millions of bottles, the total trade volume of the participants
240	Professional tasters
180	People mobilised during the Concours (organizing staff, hotel school...)
74	Percentage of samples with a trade cost lower than 12,50€
50	Samples, the maximum tasted by a taster in one morning
48	Producing countries
45	Tasting groups, as many as there are wine waiters
30	Maximum percent of awarded wines
29	Tons of material
22	Kilos of cork stoppers
15	As in the 15th Edition of the Concours Mondial de Bruxelles



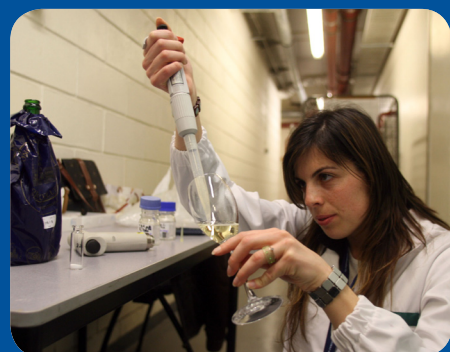
### ***What's new ?***

The Concours Mondial will be held for the first time in France, in the heart of Aquitaine, where some of the most prestigious 'crus' are produced.

In order to enhance the mediatization and to optimize the service offered to the participants, some major innovations will be introduced this year :

- The creation of a logistic center in France. Now, french winemakers can send their samples directly to Bordeaux.
- Media campaigns will be organized on key-markets. e.g: in Belgium, a column dedicated to the Concours will be published during one month in three of the most important Belgian newspapers (1.000.000 readers).

- With the aim of preserving its reputation and to sanction any attempt at fraud, The Concours Mondial will proceed with random analysis controls of the prize-winners. The results will be published on [www.concoursmondial.eu](http://www.concoursmondial.eu)





## The Organizers

The Concours Mondial de Bruxelles would not be what it is without a solid team ensuring on a daily basis the smooth running of the organization of the contest and this, in its least details, from technicalities to promotion.

- President :  
Baudouin HAVAUX
- Technical Management :  
Thomas COSTENOBLE (Enologist, Director of the Concours),  
Géraldine GERARD, Angelica IBARRA (Secretariat-General),  
Filippo BALDAN and Pierre COLLARD (Tasting Coordinators)
- Communication & PR :  
Sally WEBSTER (tasters),  
Bernard Sirot (sponsoring)  
and Jonathan QUIQUE (press)
- Administration :  
Didier FRANÇOIS

## Contact

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