



The Independent Champagne and Sparkling Wine Invitational

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**"I'VE DIED AND GONE TO CHAMPAGNE HEAVEN!"
- UNABASHED ENTHUSIASM AT FIRST EVER
INDEPENDENT CHAMPAGNE & SPARKLING WINE INVITATIONAL -**

April 23, 2010 – Exceptional bubbles and cuisine were the focus of the nation's inaugural Independent Champagne & Sparkling Wine Invitational held in New Orleans, April 16th-18th. Growers and producers representing sparkling wines worldwide were on hand to educate consumers and trade about the extensive benefits of the world's most celebrated beverage. More than 100 producers, 50 sommeliers and a dozen leading chefs were in attendance. See pictures at www.icswi2010.com.

"This first ever event was a milestone for the independent category. The interaction between the independent growers – many who had never had this type of exposure in the States before – and the attendees was amazing," says Alva Johnson, ICSWI Co-Founder and Event Manager. "We achieved our primary goal of demonstrating the incredible breadth of these independent producers."

Legendary labels on hand included Delamotte, Jose Dhondt, Drappier, Gimmonet, A. Margaine, Jean Milan, Movia, Pierre Peters, Raventós, Savès and Vazart. Tour de Champagne, known for larger houses, also partnered with ICSWI to offer the broadest tasting possible. Some of their selections included Krug, La Caravelle and Ruinart.

Producers were enthusiastic as well. Rodolphe Peters stated, "It was the most impressive assembly of grower champagne that I've ever seen in the United States, maybe France too." Sharing the sentiment was Nicole Goutorbe commenting, "What a tasting! I have never seen so many grower champagnes in one room before - not even in Champagne."

Throughout Friday and Saturday:

- Nearly 250 wines were presented;
- Over 50 tête de cuvées showcased;
- 75 sparkling wine production houses were on-site;
- Nearly 3,000 bottles delivered;
- 4,000 wine glasses on site;
- Above the Grand Tasting, French circus-inspired aerial artists performed; and

- Ongoing celebratory toasts were made.

“Conference attendees were blown away by the value of the ticket price, having the time of their lives discovering and learning about new Champagnes and sparkling wines,” said Brad Baker, The Champagne Warrior. “They all commented they can't wait for the 2011 edition.”

One attendee even made the comment, “I feel as if I’ve died and entered the pearly gates of champagne heaven!”

Of course the event was not devoid of local flavor – sommeliers were stated to be pouring with two hands, “the good old New Orleans way.”

About ICSWI

ICSWI, the Independent Champagne and Sparkling Wine Invitational, is a world premiere conference (aka "Fizz Fest") that was held in the culinary mecca of New Orleans, April 16-18, 2010. Designed to be an unforgettable three days of extravagance, education, and fun, ICSWI exposed consumers and trade to independent global producers who are making exceptional, hand-crafted products in the independent spirit.