



2024 Competition Class Descriptions

Class	Name	Description
A	Aperitif Sherry	This class is intended for dry and not-too-sweet sherry, Madeira and related type wines. Residual sugar should be in the range of 0% - 6%. Alcohol should be considerably higher than in a table wine (15.5% - 20%). The very sweet wines of these types belong to the After Dinner Class.
B	Aperitif	A wine whose production involves the addition of herbs, bitters or other flavourings, intended for use as an aperitif. Wines that exhibit the strong aperitif characteristic of the ingredient such as citrus, muscat, or other strongly-flavoured fruits belong in this class. The class includes vermouth type wines as well as those similar to the patent aperitifs. Most tend to the sweet rather than the dry end of the sugar spectrum. Alcohol should be considerably higher than in a table wine (16% - 18%).
C	Dry White Grape	Sugar content in white table wines can vary from uncompromisingly dry (as in Burgundies, Washington or California Chardonnays), to slightly sweet (as in dry German wines), to SG 1.010. Colour is pale straw to light gold, with no amber or brown tinges. Acid 0.5%- 0.8%. Alcohol 9%-14%. There are no direct entries to this class; the wines have to be entered to one of the (sub)classes (C1-4). The class description above applies to all subclasses unless stated otherwise.
C1	Chardonnay	Wines must contain at least 85% Chardonnay.
C2	Aromatic White	A dry or off-dry white wine that demonstrates a striking perfumed quality. That quality may reflect floral character, fruit character, or both. Typically made as a varietal wine from grapes such as any of the muscats, Bacchus, Ehrenfelser, Gewürztraminer, Malvasia, Optima, Ortega, Pearl of Csaba, Scheurebe, Schönburger, Siegerrebe, Viognier, Riesling and others. Preferred examples will usually have been cold-fermented.
C4	Other White	This class contains all other white wines, either varietals or blends that do not fit the definitions of Classes C1 and C2
D	Still Rose Grape	Wines in this class may range in colour from the palest pink to a very light red. Purple tinges are undesirable but an orange tinge is permissible if it is not too pronounced. Sugar may range from completely dry to slightly sweet
E	Dry Red Grape	A red table wine is usually free of residual sugar (under 0.75%), although a well balanced and aged red will have some glycerin and a softness that could be mistaken for "sweetness". Colour may range from light red to garnet, with the tawny edge of a well-matured wine being preferable to the red-purple of a younger wine. Wines should be medium to full bodied, and may be noticeably astringent. Acid 0.4%- 0.6%. Alcohol 11%- 15%. There are no direct entries to this class; the wines have to be entered to one of the (sub)classes (E1-6). The class description above applies to all subclasses unless stated otherwise.
E1	Bordeaux Style	A wine made from the traditional "noble" Bordeaux varietals: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Malbec and Carmenère. Bordeaux Style wines can be blended or 100% varietal.
E2	Pinot Family	Wines must contain at least 85% of one or more of the following varieties: Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier, or Gamay Noir. Ideally, these wines exhibit fruity attributes and may be at their peak when young. The best mature examples demonstrate complexity and finesse while retaining substantial fruit.
E4	Zinfandel	Wines must contain at least 85% Zinfandel.
E5	Rhone Style	A dry red table wine made from at least 85% of one or more of the following grape varieties: Alicante Bouschet, Carignane, Grenache, Mourvèdre, Petite Syrah (Durif), and Syrah (Shiraz). Blends may also contain any other variety permitted in the Chateauneuf-du-Pape appellation. Note that any other (i.e., non-Rhone) variety or varieties may be used in the remaining 15%.
E6	Other Red	This class contains all other red wines, either varietals or blends that do not fit the definitions of Classes E1, E2, E4, or E5. Specifically, wines that contain less than 100% Bordeaux varietals, less than 85% Pinot or Gamay, less than 85% Zinfandel, or less than 85% Rhone varietals belong in this class.

F	Dessert	Wines to be drunk with the dessert course of a meal. Should be sweet and luscious but with sufficient acid (0.7% - 0.85%) to keep them from being cloying, and should not be astringent. Sauternes and sweet late harvest Rieslings are examples. May be grape or fruit. Alcohol should be 10% to 15%, and developed only by fermentation of the wine. These are not fortified wines. (Ports, sherries, madeiras and other fortified wines don't belong in this class - see After Dinner).
G	After Dinner	These wines are for use after dinner, perhaps with nuts or cheese or in place of a liqueur. Ports, sweet sherries, madeiras or other wines that are fortified, baked or otherwise made using port or sherry type methods belong in this class. An appropriate, completely naturally fermented wine such as fig or raisin also belongs here. These wines are invariably sweet (SG 1.025 - 1.050), with alcohol 15% - 20%.
H	Sparkling	There are Sparkling wines appropriate for any occasion, for use with virtually any food. Wines will be judged on initial sparkle and on duration/retention of sparkle. (Pressure of CO2 should be 2 - 5 Atm.) May be grape or fruit, dry or sweet, any colour. Cider is <u>not</u> included in this class (see class P). Acid 0.6% - 0.8%. Alcohol 9% - 13%. Sparkling wines must not have sediment in the bottle.
I	Social	A wine from either grape or fruit that strikes a happy medium: neither too sweet nor too dry and should not be too high in alcohol. Social wines should have universal appeal and be able to stand on their own without food.
J	Non-Grape	A Non-Grape wine might fit the purpose of any other wine class and would thus have the technical characteristics of that particular class. For example, a port-style wine made from blackberries should otherwise comply with the definition of the After Dinner class. The entrant must specify the intended style.
P	Sparkling Cider	A sparkling beverage of 6 to 10% alcohol content, dry to medium sweetness, low to medium acidity. Acid, sugar, and other characteristics should be in balance. Cider can be made from either or both apple juice (Cider), or pear juice (Perry) or from some combination of one or both of those juices with other fruit (non-grape) juice. The other juice must be less than 50% of the blend and the flavour of the other fruit should not dominate. The difficult-to-define, zesty character of traditional cider must be present and will be a direct reflection of the cidemaker's skill in selecting ingredients. Any form of carbonation acceptable in the Sparkling Class is also acceptable in the Sparkling Cider Class. Sparkle should be controlled and prolonged. Fine champagne-like bubbles trailing from the bottom of the glass are preferred. Cider may be disgorged or presented on the priming yeast. In the latter case the cider must pour clear to within 3 cm of the bottom of the bottle.
N	Novice	A wine made by a "Novice Winemaker", i.e., a competitor who has never won an award in any other wine class. Once the competitor has accumulated 12 or more points in one or more VAWA Novice Competitions, he/she also becomes ineligible to enter the Novice Wine Classes. There are no direct entries to this class; the wines have to be entered to one of the (sub)classes (NC - NJ). The definition above applies to all subclasses.
NC	Novice Dry White Grape	A wine which fits the description of any of the C classes, made by a "Novice Winemaker".
NE	Novice Dry Red Grape	A wine which fits the description of any of the E classes, made by a "Novice Winemaker".
NI	Novice Social	A wine which fits the description of the I class, made by a "Novice Winemaker".
NJ	Novice Non-Grape	A wine which fits the description of the J class, made by a "Novice Winemaker".