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UK sparkling wines earn top honors at 2025 Decanter World Wine Awards

English and Welsh producers see record recognition as sales surge and magnum-aged vintages gain international acclaim

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Vintage sparkling wines from the United Kingdom have achieved significant recognition at the 2025 Decanter World Wine Awards (DWWA), the world's largest wine competition. The event, known for its rigorous judging by leading experts, highlighted the growing reputation of UK sparkling wines on the international stage. This year's results underscore a period of rapid growth and increasing quality in the sector, with UK sparkling wine sales rising 187% between 2018 and 2023 to reach 6.2 million bottles,

according to industry group WineGB.

For the first time, DWWA’s magnum category was open to sparkling wines beyond Champagne, providing an opportunity for UK producers to compete in this prestigious format. Sugrue South Downs seized this chance with its The Trouble With Dreams 2009 in magnum, earning one of only 50 Best in Show medals awarded from thousands of entries. Only 600 magnums of this wine were produced, blending Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier grapes from Jenkyn Place vineyard in Hampshire. The wine spent 12 years aging on lees and an additional two years under cork after disgorgement. Judges described it as youthful and energetic, noting that extended aging had enhanced its complexity and depth.

The Trouble With Dreams 2009 was the inaugural vintage for Sugrue South Downs. The winemaker behind it, Dermot Sugrue, has received increasing attention for his work. His wife Ana, also a winemaker and former oenology lecturer at Plumpton College, joined the team in 2021. Investment from hotelier Robin Hutson OBE allowed them to build their own winery, which now offers tastings by appointment and focuses on producing magnums in ageworthy vintages. While the 2009 magnums have sold out, 1,000 magnums of the 2020 vintage are expected to be released in September 2025.

Eight more vintage English sparkling wines made from classic Champagne grape varieties won top medals at DWWA 2025. Two received Platinum awards: Digby Fine English Rosé Brut 2018 and Bluestone Blanc de Noirs Brut 2019. Judges praised Digby’s rosé for its red fruit character and vibrant acidity, while Bluestone’s Blanc de Noirs was noted for its apricot and peach aromas and focused palate.

Six English sparkling wines earned Gold medals. Hoffman & Rathbone’s Blanc de Noir Brut 2015 showcased the potential of Pinot Meunier with nine years of lees aging before release. A magnum of Squerryes North Downs Brut 2015 also won Gold after more than eight years on lees. Squerryes Estate has been family-owned for over three centuries and began planting vines in 2006 after declining an offer from a major Champagne house.

Four Gold medals went to Blanc de Blancs wines made entirely from Chardonnay grapes. Breaky Bottom’s Cuvée Geoffrey Aldred Brut 2018 marked winemaker Peter Hall’s first single-variety Chardonnay release since founding the East Sussex estate in 1974. Other Gold winners included Oxney Organic Estate Blanc de Blancs Extra Brut 2019, Ashling Park Estate Blanc de Blancs Brut 2014 from West Sussex, and Gusbourne Commanders Vineyard Blanc de Blancs Brut 2019 from Kent.

In addition to these top honors, several UK sparkling wines received Silver and Bronze medals at DWWA 2025. Notably, two Bronze medalists came from Pembrokeshire in Wales, reflecting a broader regional spread of quality producers.

The strong performance of UK sparkling wines at DWWA 2025 highlights both the progress made by English and Welsh producers and the growing interest among consumers worldwide. With more wineries focusing on traditional methods and extended aging—especially in magnum format—the sector is poised for continued growth and international acclaim.