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Wine Enthusiast's 2014 Wine Star Award Nominees Include 4 from Washington State

Global wine publication's recognition is latest in a string of critical accolades

SEATTLE (Aug. 29, 2014) – A Washington State winery, two individuals and a wine region were nominated by Wine Enthusiast Magazine for its 2014 Wine Star Awards, an honor that recognizes leaders in the world of wine and spirits. Nominees included Woodinville-based DeLille Cellars for American Winery of the Year; Charles Smith of Walla Walla's K Vintners and Charles Smith Wines for Winemaker of the Year, his third consecutive year being nominated in this category; the Red Mountain AVA for Wine Region of the Year; and Christophe Baron of Walla Walla's Cayuse Vineyards for Innovator/Executive of the Year, a new award that celebrates the industry's most creative and influential trendsetters in the business space.

Nominees were selected by a global team of Wine Enthusiast editors, and the winners will be announced in the magazine's Dec. 31 Wine Star Awards issue.

This is the latest in a string of accolades for Washington, the second-largest premium wine-producing state in the country. In June, the Decanter World Wine Awards presented the L'Ecole N° 41 2011 Estate Ferguson from Ferguson Vineyard in the Walla Walla Valley with its prestigious International Trophy for Best in Show, Red Bordeaux Varietals over £15. Washington has also consistently outperformed California with a higher percentage of wines scoring 90 points and above, while maintaining a lower average cost for these wines, based on Wine Spectator magazine's ratings. Over the past four years, an average of 48 percent of Washington State wines scored 90 points or higher, with an average cost of just \$43, compared to 34 percent of California wines at \$71. A recent issue of The Wine Advocate said Washington State has "a large number of wines [in the \$30-\$50 range] able to stand toe-to-toe with wines from around the world that cost three to five times that amount."

"We're honored by the growing critical recognition," said Steve Warner, president of Washington State Wine, the organization that represents the wineries and grape growers of Washington State. "We've long known we had the soil, the climate and the talent of a world-class winegrowing region. It's wonderful to see that in the spotlight."

About Washington State Wine:

Washington State Wine represents every licensed winery and wine grape grower in Washington State. Guided by an appointed board, WSW provides a marketing platform to raise positive awareness of the Washington State wine industry and generate greater demand for its wines. Funded almost entirely by the industry through assessments based on grape and wine sales, WSW is a state government agency, established by the legislature in 1987. To learn more, visit www.washingtonwine.org.

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