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- [Home](#)
- [Medal Winners](#) ▾
- [Wineries](#) ▾
- [Judges](#) ▾
- [Public Tasting](#) ▾
- [Sponsors](#) ▾
- [About Us](#) ▾
- [Media & Press](#) ▾

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News Release: March 13, 2001

Chronicle Wine Competition Applauded By Vintners & Consumers

2,000 Attend Tasting at Herbst Pavilion

San Francisco, California (March 13, 2001) - Two thousand eager consumers swirled, sniffed and sipped their way through 981 medal-winning wines from 240 wineries during the public tasting of The San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition at Herbst Pavilion, Fort Mason, San Francisco on Saturday, March 10, 2001. Twenty-five professional wine judges chose the medal winners from 1,228 entries at the event's competition held February 1-2 in Cloverdale.

Vintners and guests alike shared the excitement of having hundreds of medal-winning wines under one roof. "We're reaching out to a whole new crowd," said General Manager Suzanne Frontz of Cinnabar Vineyards & Winery, Saratoga. "This tasting gives small producers an opportunity to showcase their wines in San Francisco."

Besides great wine, visitors sampled a variety of gourmet foods from a select group of Bay Area producers, restaurateurs and caterers. "There's something here for everybody," said Jeff Baker of Santa Clara. "The food was well prepared and enhanced the wine tasting experience. It's difficult to appreciate wine without it." Other guests expressed their pleasure at meeting the vintners. "This event has better accessibility than other wine events," said Lucia Nardi, a San Francisco native. "I like trying the wines and talking to the winemakers."

As the principal sponsor of the event, The San Francisco Chronicle was pleased to see a good turnout at the public tasting. "This is a model event for The Chronicle," said Dianne Levy, Chronicle Promotions special projects director. "All comments from the public and our staff attending the tasting were a rousing 'thumbs up'. We're looking forward to next year."

[Home](#) | [Medal Winners](#) | [Wineries](#) | [Wine Judges](#) | [Sponsors](#) | [Public Tasting](#) | [About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#)