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WINE NEWS

Victory Erupts at the Volcano

The Ratcliffs' Syrah is on fire

By Wine Press Staff

Volcano Vineyards, a Rogue Valley winery, has announced that its **2005 Syrah** was named **Best of Show** at the second annual **National Women's Wine Competition**, winning the prestigious American Airlines Judges' Choice Award. The Syrah also won a Double Gold Medal and was picked as the Sweepstakes Red winner as Best Red Varietal.

"The National Women's Wine Competition is only in its second year, but its slate of judges is unbelievable, a 'who's who' of the top women in the wine industry" said Volcano Vineyards owner Liz Ratcliff. "For our 2005 Syrah to be chosen as the best wine from over 1,600 entries from both the U.S. and abroad is an overwhelming honor."

Volcano Vineyards is owned and operated by Scott and Liz Ratcliff who decided to go "pro" with their home winemaking shortly after moving to Bend from San Francisco in 2001.

Their wine education started early, but as Liz explained, "While I wish we could say that we learned to walk in granddad's vineyards or jammed Uncle Harry's bottling line with a Barbie Doll, the fact is our initial exposure was on the consumer side. Scott's folks started visiting Napa Valley in the late '60s. My dad was hit with the wine bug in the early '80s, falling in love with Chateaufort du Pape."

Scott and Liz met when they were both waiters in San Francisco. Scott credits their time in restaurants as vital to developing their palates.



"As a waiter in a four- or five-star restaurant, the more you know about the food you are serving and the wine on your list that perfectly complements it, the better experience your guests will have," he said. "We found we preferred wines that were food friendly, well-balanced and true to the fruit, crafted in a more European style. And that is our winemaking philosophy for Volcano Vineyards."

Volcano Vineyards 2005 Syrah is from **Lakeside Vineyard** in Jacksonville, a site that sits at a slight elevation and benefits from a long growing season and even temperatures. The grapes are believed to be a Hermitage clone acquired from Joseph Phelps. The wine was aged for 16 months exclusively in oak barrels from a variety of French coopers, and is extremely food-friendly, complementing salty or bitter foods, such as olive tapenade, or dishes with lemon or caper accents.

The National Women's Wine Competition is the only competition with an all-women judging panel, reflecting the marketplace reality that women make 60 to 70 percent of all wine-buying decisions. The competition set the wine world abuzz in 2007 when it was founded by Lea Pierce, De-Anna Alba and Judith Oppenheimer.

Volcano Vineyards Tasting Lounge is located at 930 N.W. Brooks Street by The Pine Tavern in downtown Bend. Visit www.VolcanoVineyards.com.

