

Old Mutual Trophy Spirits Show winners for 2020

South Africa secured the lion's share of the gold medals and trophies across most major classes in second annual Old Mutual Trophy Spirits Show. To ensure Covid-19 compliance, the results were announced virtually on Wednesday, 25 November.



Three Ships Cask Matured Whisky Aged 9 Years Fino Cask Finish Limited Release

The number of competition entries was significantly down on 2019 as the lockdown wrought havoc on the viability of the local craft spirits sector. The biggest attrition was in the gin classes – a clear indication of the destructive impact of three months without sales on artisanal producers.

Overall, there were 14 trophy winners, including 3 best overall category trophies, 10 gold medallists, 40 silver medallists and 32 bronzes.

The trophy for the show's best whisky was won by Three Ships Cask Matured Whisky Aged 9 Years Fino Cask Finish Limited Release, which also won the trophy for the show's best blended whisky. It was produced by Andy Watts whose creations also won a number of gold medals as well as the Old Mutual Trophy for the Best Grain Whisky, for the Bain's Founder's Collection 18 Years Oloroso Cask Finish Special Release Single Grain Whisky.

The trophy for the Show's best Malt whisky was awarded to the WhiskyBrother selection of The BenRiach 2007. The competition's best pure pot still trophy laureate was Green Spot, for the single pot still Irish Whiskey.



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The Riedel Trophy for the show's best gin was won by Beefeater, for its London Dry Gin. The Beefeater also won the class trophy for the best London dry gin while the distillery also secured the class gold medal for the Beefeater 24. The trophy for the best flavoured gin was awarded to Whitley Neill for its Aloe & Cucumber Gin and the trophy for the best distilled gin went to Cape Fynbos. The Tequila trophy winner was Olmeca, for its Altos Reposado.

The brandy classes were replete with gold medals and trophy winners: there was a strong local entry as well as a number of Cognacs. The trophy for the Show's best brandy was presented to Cognac Frapin for the Château Fontpinot XO, which also won the trophy for the show's best cognac. The trophy for the show's best pot-distilled brandy went to the Van Ryn's Single Potstill Brandy Aged 12 Years, while the Old Mutual Trophy for the competition's best vintage brandy went to Van Ryn's, for the single pot-still 12-year-old.



All the Trophy winners

- Trophy for Best Brandy of Show, Old Mutual Trophy for Best Cognac: Cognac Frapin Château Fontpinot XO
- Trophy for Best Blended Brandy: Viceroy Brandy Aged 5 Years
- Trophy for Best Pot-distilled Brandy: Van Ryn's Single Potstill Brandy Aged 12 Years
- Old Mutual Trophy for Best London Gin, Riedel Trophy for Best Gin of Show: Beefeater London Dry Gin
- Old Mutual Trophy for Best Distilled Gin: Cape Fynbos Gin
- Best Flavoured Gin: Whitley Neill Aloe & Cucumber Gin
- Trophy for Best Whisky of Show, Old Mutual Trophy for Best Blended Whisky: Three Ships Cask Matured Whisky Aged 9 Years Fino Cask Finish Limited Release
- Old Mutual Trophy for Best Grain Whisky: Bain's Founders Collection Aged 18 Years Oloroso Cask Finish Special Release Single Grain Whisky
- Best Single Malt Whisky: The BenRiach 2007 exclusively bottled for WhiskyBrother
- Trophy for Best Pot Still Whisk(e)y: Green Spot Single Still Irish Whiskey
- Old Mutual Trophy for Best Tequila of Show: Olmeca Altos Reposado 100% Tequila

Gold medal winners

- Aberlour Highland Single Malt Scotch Whisky 16 Years
- Bain's Founders Collection Aged 15 Years Special Release Single Grain Whisky
- Bain's Founders Collection Aged 18 Years Fino Cask Finish Special Release Single Grain Whisky
- Beefeater 24
- Chivas Regal Extra
- Malfy Gin Originale
- Malfy Gin Rosa
- The London No. 1 Gin
- Uitkyk Pot still Brandy 10 year old Grand Reserve
- Wildcraft Equinox 79 Gin

Judging panel

The line-up of judges comprised only locally-based specialists as a result of the restrictions imposed on international travel. The panels were made up of Marlene Bester, Pieter de Bod, Greta Geldenhuys, Kobus Gelderblom, Dave Gunns, Jonathan Miles, Kresan Naidu, Mare-Loe Prinsloo, Dr Caroline Snyman and Johan Venter.

Show convenor, Michael Fridjhon Fridjhon was satisfied with the number of entries, taking account of the impact of the

protracted lockdown on the liquor industry. "We are very conscious of the attrition amongst craft distillers, for whom the show provides a valuable platform from which to gain visibility. This was recognised by some of the country's bigger local players as well as the imported spirits distributors, a number of whose entries actually increased this year, despite budget cuts.

"No doubt the presence of the same team which has been involved in the Old Mutual Trophy Wine Show since its inception in 2002 contributed to the enthusiasm with which producers and their representatives engaged with Alex Mason-Gordon, the show manager," Fridjhon said.

Thobile Tshabalala, head of brand at Old Mutual, commented, "This year has been a year of uncertainty and endless challenges, with a clear emphasis on our need to adapt to survive. What remains certain and important however is that we continue to support, recognise and congratulate those that strive to become their exceptional best.

"Even with the challenges that many industries have faced, we are delighted that the industry still managed to take those first small steps to achieve great things. We are thrilled with the number of participants in the second year of the Old Mutual Trophy Spirits Show, with so many South African achievements to be proud of."

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