

RULES & REGULATIONS

1. Entry deadline for wines to arrive is March 13, 2026

Please note NEW shipping address!

Wines are to be delivered to:

Battenkill Communications, Inc.

c/o Hardpack Distributors

116 Hills Court / P.O. Box 730

East Dorset, VT 05253 USA

Ph: (802) 362-3981 ext. 106

2. Send ONE (1) BOTTLE per entry. Still wines must be submitted in standard 750 ml wine bottles. Ice wines or late harvest wines can be submitted in 375 ml bottles. Meads and Hard Ciders can be submitted in 12 oz. or 22 oz. beer bottles. Sparkling wines must be in champagne bottles with proper closure and wire or crown cap. All bottles must be free of wax, decorative labels and capsules. However, an identification label will be required on the bottle as detailed in rule #5.

3. Entry fee is \$30 U.S. dollars (or \$30 Canadian dollars) for each wine entered. Each individual person is allowed up to a total of 25 entries. You may enter in as many categories as you wish. Make checks payable to **WineMaker**. Only U.S. or Canadian funds will be accepted. On your check write the number of entries (no more than 25 total) and the name of the entrant if different from the name on the check. Entry fees are non-refundable.

4. All shipments should be packaged to withstand considerable handling and must be shipped freight pre-paid. Line the inside of the box with a plastic trash bag and use plenty of packaging material, such as bubble wrap, around the bottles. Bottles shipped in preformed styrofoam cartons have proven reliable in the past. Every reasonable effort will be made to contact entrants whose bottles have broken to make arrangements for sending replacement bottles. Please note it is illegal to ship alcoholic beverages via the U.S. Postal Service. FedEx Air and FedEx Ground will destroy all amateur wine shipments so do not use either of these services. Private shipping companies such as UPS with company policies against individuals shipping alcohol may refuse your shipment if they are informed your package contains alcoholic beverages. Entries mailed internationally are often required by customs to provide proper documentation. It is the entrant's responsibility to follow all applicable laws and regulations. Packages with postage due or C.O.D. charges will be rejected.

5. Each bottle must be labeled with the

following information: Your name, category number, wine ingredients, vintage.

Example: K. Jones, 9, 75% Baco Noir, 25% Foch, 2020. If you are using a wine kit for ingredients please list the brand and product name as the wine ingredients. Example: K. Jones, 22, Winexpert Selection International French Cabernet Sauvignon, 2021. A copy of the entry form, listing each of your wines entered, must accompany entry and payment.

6. It is entirely up to you to decide which of the 50 categories you should enter. You should enter each wine in the category in which you feel it will perform best. Wines must contain a minimum of 75% of designated type if entered as a varietal. Varietals of less than 75% must be entered as blends. To make sure all entries are judged fairly, the **WineMaker** staff may re-classify an entry that is obviously in the wrong category or has over 75% percentage of a specific varietal but is entered as a blend.

7. Wine kits and concentrate-based wines will compete side-by-side with fresh fruit and juice-based wines in all listed categories.

8. The origin of many Native American grapes is unknown due to spontaneous cross-breeding. For the purposes of this competition, however, the Native American varietal category will include, but is not limited to, the following grape families: Aestivalis, Labrusca, Riparia and Rotundifolia (muscadine).

9. For sparkling wine categories, dry/semi-dry is defined as <3% residual sugar and sweet as >3% residual sugar.

10. Contest is open to any amateur home winemaker. Your wine must not have been made by a professional commercial winemaker or at any commercial winery. No employee of **WineMaker** magazine may enter. Persons under freelance contract with Battenkill Communications are eligible. No person employed by a manufacturer of wine kits may enter. Winemaking supply retail store owners and their employees are eligible. Judges may not judge a category they have entered. Applicable entry fees and limitations shall apply.

11. All wines will be judged according to their relative merits within the category. Gold, silver and bronze medals within each category will be awarded on point totals and will not be restricted to the top three wines only (for example, a number of wines may earn enough points to win gold). The

KEY DATES

Entry deadline for wines to arrive in Vermont at new shipping address (see rule #1):
March 13, 2026

Wines judged:
April 24-26, 2026

Results first announced online at winemakermag.com
May 15, 2026

Best of Show awards will be those wines clearly superior within those stated categories. The Grand Champion award is given to the top overall wine in the entire competition.

12. The Winemaker of the Year award will be given to the individual whose top 5 scoring wine entries have the highest average judging score among all entrants.

13. The Club of the Year, Retailer of the Year and U-Vint of the Year awards will be based on the following point scale:
Gold Medal (or any Best of Show medal): 3 points
Silver Medal: 2 points
Bronze Medal: 1 point

The amateur club that accumulates the most overall points from its members' wine entries will win Club of the Year. The home winemaking retail store that accumulates the most overall points from its customers' wine entries will win Retailer of the Year. The U-Vint or On-Premise winemaking facility that accumulates the most overall points from its customer's wine entries will win U-Vint of the Year.

14. The Best of Show Estate Grown award will be given to the top overall scoring wine made with at least 75% fruit grown by the entrant. Both grape and country fruit wines are eligible.

15. All entrants will receive a copy of the judging notes for their wines. Medalists will be listed by category online.

16. All wine will become the property of **WineMaker** magazine and will not be released after the competition.

17. All decisions by competition organizers and judges are final.