

Annual Diners Club Winelist Awards announced

The annual Diners Club Winelist Awards were announced this week, with the Western Cape leading in the Diamond Award and other categories.

Based on the simple but accurate premise that the perfect meal is greatly enhanced by a matching fine wine, the annual Awards seek to encourage food and wine serving establishments to improve standards of wine selections offered to patrons.

MasterChef South Africa's judge and restaurant consultant Peter Goffe-Wood was joined by Marilyn Cooper, head of the Cape Wine Academy; Winestyle owner, Nikki Dumas; author of dining guide Rossouw's Restaurants, JP Rossouw; as well as leading wine critics and judges Fiona McDonald and Christine Rudman. Also on this year's panel - chaired by veteran wine critic and author David Hughes - was Matthew van Heerden, the reigning Diners Club Young Winemaker of the Year.

"The number of entries has once again increased this year and, along with it, the overall standard. The best have become even better and the middle range is becoming more adventurous, which is very exciting indeed," says David Hughes.

"The South African wine industry is a true national asset and any initiatives that succeed in providing a fitting platform for our local produce should be welcomed. With a long and proud history that supports the improvement of wine selection standards, the awards have become the established benchmark for excellence," says Jane Ledger from Diners Club International.

She adds, "We congratulate all our merchants who have been awarded and thank them for their commitment to raising the bar and in so doing, creating more memorable dining experiences."

A Silver Award represents a score of between 60% and 70%, a Gold Award between 71% and 80%, a Platinum Award 81% and 90%, and a Diamond Award over 91%.

Diners Club's other category winners in the Western Cape include:

- **Best New Entry:** Buffelsdrift Game Lodge (Eastern Cape)
- **Best Platinum:** La Motte Wine Estate
- **Best Winelist:** La Colombe
- **Best Wine Steward:** Ewan Mackenzie (La Colombe)

The national list of winners will be released later this week.

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