

New Cape Wine masters, one wins brandy award

Kristina Beuthner, Mike Lee, Lyn Woodward and Sarah Newton (all members of the Wild Yeasts tasting group in Johannesburg) are the four newest Cape Wine Masters (CWM) graduates, having received their Diplomas from the Institute of Cape Wine Masters. The Van Ryn's Brandy Cellar in Stellenbosch hosted this year's graduation function on Friday 7 May 2010.



(L-R) Kristina Beuthner, Mike Lee, Lyn Woodward and Sarah Newton

First recipient of Sabrage award

Sarah Newton, an analytical chemist, has engaged in brief stints in advising customers on wine in restaurants and retail stores and is a member of the Cellar Rats Wine Tasting Club, the Bubbly Club and the Wild Yeasts. She started the CWA Preliminary course in 1998 and obtained the CWA Diploma II in 2001. Her dissertation was 'Sparkling wine: The growth of this category of wine in South Africa'. She received a distinction in both the theory and brandy tasting - she also attained the highest marks ever for the sparkling wine tasting examination. She was designated the winner of the Van Ryn's Trophy for Brandy Excellence and the first recipient of the newly instituted Villiera Sabrage award.

"Sarah showed exceptional conversancy with brandy, both as a taster and in her theoretical knowledge," says Cape Wine Academy principal, Marilyn Cooper. "The brandy module of the CWM is compulsory and comprises a written and tasting test involving brandies from around the world."

Other CWM, awards

Lyn Woodward is a freelance wine writer, food stylist and educator with a degree in business management. She completed several wine courses including a Cape Wine Academy introductory wine course as part of her Diploma at the Christina Martin Chef's School in Durban. During seven years of working experience at the Cape Wine Academy, Woodward also led a wine and food tour of France and trips around the Cape winelands. Her dissertation was 'Wine packaging: alternatives to traditional glass'. She is also the recipient of the viniculture award from Groenland Winery, only awarded for the second time since its sponsorship in 2007.

Kristina Beuthner is a multilingual, part-time wine consultant and importer/exporter, who worked in France, Germany and Columbia after attaining her double diploma in Business Administration. On completion of the two-year CWA Wine Diploma, she started her CWM studies in 2006. Her dissertation was 'The future of Riesling in SA and what we can learn from the recent improvements in Germany (eg the Rheingau)'.

Mike Lee is an engineer in the manufacturing and logistics sphere and a qualified photographer, who enjoys travel, food and golf. His passion for wine - especially the Mediterranean red wines of Spain, Italy and France, in particular those of Burgundy - started when he was a university student in 1982. Lee started certificate courses at the Cape Wine Academy, completing the CWA diploma in 2003 followed by the Cape Wine Masters programme in 2010. His dissertation was 'Rhone-style red wines in South Africa'.

Wine Personality of the Year

The Institute of Cape Wine Masters also presented its Wine Personality of the Year Award to Pietman Retief for his contribution to the wine and brandy industry over more than 40 years. He was the executive director of The Brandy Foundation for 12 years and previously headed up the corporate PR division of Distillers Corporation. He is still actively involved in wine tourism and education.

The dissertations are available on the Cape Wine Academy website www.capewineacademy.co.za and at the SAWIS library.

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