

# Shiraz Challenge awards announce Shiraz Stars for 2017

A dozen remarkable Shiraz wines and three impressive Shiraz blends were announced during the fifth annual Shiraz Challenge awards ceremony held on Wednesday, 31 May 2017 at the Rhebokskloof Wine Estate in Paarl.

A dozen remarkable Shiraz wines and three impressive Shiraz blends captured the limelight during the fifth annual Shiraz Challenge awards ceremony held on Wednesday, 31 May 2017 at the Rhebokskloof Wine Estate in Paarl. Fans of this noble cultivar can safely set their sights on these front-runners when next they find themselves facing the extensive range of wines on the shelf of any retail space.



Front l to r: Madri Dreyer (D'Aria), Heino Freudenberg (Vinventions), Johan Conradie (Vinventions/Berthonieu), Tamarin Turck-Nel (Cederberg).  
Back l na r: Gerhard Swart (Flagstone), Conrad Vlok (Strandveld), Braam Gericke (Wildekrans), Anthony de Jager (Fairview), Frikkie van Zyl (Saronsberg), André Ockers (Wildekrans), Michael Langenhoven (La Motte), Stuart Botha (Eagle's Nest), Randolph Christians (Rustenberg), Louwritz Louw (KWW), Mario Damon (Bellingham)

According to SA Shiraz chairperson Edmund Terblanche, some 220 wines vied for inclusion in the top echelon – a steady climb of entries since the inception of the competition in 2013. “Initially we focused only on Shiraz, but soon after we invited winemakers to put forward their best blends as we see this competition as an encompassing celebration of Shiraz,” he says. “We’ve witnessed consistent growth in the blends category – not only for the Rhône style, but for all compositions where Shiraz remains the leading component.”

## The top Shiraz wines for 2017 are:

- Cederberg Shiraz 2015
- D'Aria The Soprano Shiraz 2015
- Eagle's Nest Shiraz 2014
- Fairview Beacon Shiraz 2014
- Fairview Swartland Shiraz 2014
- Flagstone Dark Horse Shiraz 2013

- KWV Cathedral Cellar Shiraz 2015
- La Motte Pierneef Syrah Viognier 2015
- Rustenberg Buzzard Kloof Syrah 2015
- Saronsberg Shiraz 2015
- Strandveld Syrah 2013
- Wildekrans Barrel Select Reserve Shiraz 2015

### **Top 3 Shiraz blends:**

- Bellingham The Bernard Series SMV 2014
- Rustenberg Stellenbosch RM Nicholson 2015
- Saronsberg Full Circle 2015

Attendees of the award ceremony had the opportunity to taste the 25 Shiraz finalists and the top 10 Shiraz blends and the winners were served with lunch.

### **Top performing producers – the stats**

Shiraz SA also honoured a handful of cellars for their consistently high achievements over the first five years of the competition, based on their number of winning wines and number of finalist wines during this time, namely Cederberg, KWV, Fairview, Eagles' Nest and Saronsberg.

- Only two producers, Cederberg Winery and KWV, have consistently staked their claim on the much-coveted list of top Shiraz wines with wins in every year of the competition.
- KWV is the only cellar to have won a duo of awards in three consecutive years: 2x Shiraz winners in 2014, 2x Shiraz blend winners in 2015 and 2x Shiraz winners in 2016.
- To date Saronsberg and Fairview have each earned a whopping five trophies for their entries.
- Eagles' Nest produced a winner or finalist in every year since the start of the competition.

### **Judging line-up**

Eight esteemed judges took responsibility for the stringent adjudication process, with Dr Andy Roediger at the helm. Which started for him as a lightweight interest in wine and a consequent wine course at the Wine Academy, had led to producing his own garagist wines and completing his Cape Wine Master thesis on Phenolic ripeness in South Africa. Roediger shares his expertise with many leading wine producers by carrying out phenolic ripeness analyses on a commercial basis in his laboratory.

The rest of the judging line-up included Charles Hopkins (De Grendel cellar master), Cathy van Zyl (British Master of Wine), Pearl Oliver (head sommelier at the Taj Hotel in Cape Town), Edmund Terblanche (La Motte cellar master and Shiraz SA chairperson), Samarie Smit (wine writer and editor of *Die Burger: Versnit* and regular judge at Veritas and the SA Young Wine Show) and Maryna Huysamen (Cape Wine Makers Guild protégé). Huysamen's inclusion serves as

training to provide exposure for future judges.

International wine judge Claus Fischer joined the team for the first time. Fischer applies his academic background in chemistry in the wine environment, having focused amongst others on the development of an aroma wheel for German wines. Fischer remarked about the impressive speed of the tastings which delivered such high standard, in-depth scorings.

The marketing and sales of mixed batches of the winning wines will be handled by CyberCeller. Visit their [website](#) if you're a Shiraz fan and need to augment your wine stash.

Contact Sandra Lotz for more information at 082 924 7254 or [email](#) her.

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