

# Absa Top 10 Pinotage winners announced for 2018

The Pinotage Association in collaboration with Absa has announced its Absa Top 10 Pinotage winners for 2018. The trophy ceremony was held at Cavalli estate outside of Somerset West, which saw a panel of judges comprising Neil Ellis of Neil Ellis Wines (chairman), Samarie Smith, Benguela Cove's Brand and Business Manager, winemaker Francois Haasbroek, wine educator Nomonde Kubheka and Francois Rautenbach, wine buyer for Singita.



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The competition received a record number of 161 entries, with half of the 20 finalists from vineyards based in the Stellenbosch area, which included Beyerskloof, Kaapzicht, Kanonkop and Lanzerac. The other finalists originate from Breedekloof, Piekenierskloof, Durbanville, Cape Town, Paarl, Darling and Worcester. Four of the finalists had two wines in the running, namely Diemersdal, Kaapzicht, Moreson and Kanonkop.

## The 2018 Absa Top 10 Pinotage winners:

- Allée Bleue Black Series Old Vine Pinotage 2016 - WO Piekenierskloof (Franschhoek cellar), Winemaker Van Zyl du Toit
- Beyerskloof Diesel Pinotage 2015 - WO Stellenbosch, Winemaker Anri Truter
- Diemersdal Pinotage Reserve 2017 - WO Durbanville, Winemaker Thys Louw

- Fairview Primo Pinotage 2016 - WO Paarl, Winemaker Anthony de Jager
- Flagstone Writer's Block Pinotage 2016 - WO Breedekloof (Somerset West cellar), Winemaker Gerhard Swart
- Kaapzicht Steytler Pinotage 2015 - WO Bottelary-Stellenbosch, Winemaker Danie Steytler
- Kanonkop Pinotage 2013 - WO Simonsberg-Stellenbosch, Winemaker Abrie Beeslaar
- Lyngrove Platinum Pinotage 2016 - WO Stellenbosch, Winemaker Danie van Tonder
- Môreson The Widow Maker Pinotage 2015 - WO Stellenbosch (Franschhoek cellar), Winemaker Clayton Reabow
- Rijk's Reserve Pinotage 2014 - WO Tulbagh, Winemaker Pierre Wahl

For the second year producers were invited to submit Pinotage wines older than 10 years for the Museum Class category. One of the judges, Samarie Smith, said the quality of the wines in this category was phenomenal, with judges giving near-perfect scores for some of the wines.

## **The Museum Class Trophy winners:**

- Kanonkop Pinotage 2006 - WO Simonsberg-Stellenbosch, Winemaker Abrie Beeslaar
- Neethlingshof Lord Neethling Pinotage 2003 - WO Stellenbosch, Winemaker De Wet Viljoen
- Rijk's Private Cellar Pinotage 2008 - WO Tulbagh, Winemaker Pierre Wahl

## **Runners-up**

- Grangehurst Pinotage 2008 - WO Stellenbosch, Winemaker Jeremy Walker
- Neil Ellis Vineyard Selection Pinotage 2008 - WO Stellenbosch, Winemaker Warren Ellis

Beyers Truter, chairman and founder of the Pinotage Association, highlighted that Pinotage's quality is on the upsurge and that the market for wines made from this cultivar continues to grow. "Looking at the quality of wine from the 20 finalists this year, our winemakers are undoubtedly on the right course to grow Pinotage's popularity. Not only are they embracing the grape's unique characteristics and learning how to best treat it in the vineyard and in the cellar, but they are also determined to continue improving its quality and educating South African consumers and the rest of the world about the superb wine it produces."

Beyers said winemakers are now in sync with their terroir and that this is one of the most important ingredients of the success recipe.

Congratulating the finalists and winners, John Tshabalala, Absa's managing executive: Western Cape, says the group is proud to partner with the Pinotage Association in presenting these important and prestigious industry awards. "We wish all the trophy winners, as well as finalists, great success on their winemaking journey and hope they continue to prosper in local and international wine markets."

[View the winning wines and other finalists here](#)

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