

CAPE VINTNER CLASSIFICATION



Top Cape wine estates unite to take on the world's best

The Cape's leading estate wine producers have launched an independent association to build South Africa's reputation as a producer of world-class wines and promote the Cape's distinctive site specific wines.

Known as Cape Vintner Classification (CVC), it seeks to ensure that quality Cape wines are recognised alongside the best in the world. It will also establish a system of recognition and classification for both vintners and wines which will allow for the accreditation, governance and promotion of distinctive Cape wines and provide assurance to customers of the integrity of its members.

"The Cape has over three-and-a-half centuries of wine making culture and vintners who have passed their knowledge of soils and vineyards from one generation to the next. We produce many world-class wines and it's time that our top producers begin telling their story a little more forcefully and the CVC is the ideal vehicle to do this," says founding member, Johann Rupert.

CVC, which has evolved over the past two years, will operate within the structures of the Wine of Origin Scheme and all members will meet its criteria for registered estates. In addition they must meet ownership and minimum capacity requirements and will also be subject to independent audits to ensure they adhere to the four cornerstones of membership. The key criteria for membership of the CVC are:

Ownership and Minimum Capacity

Ownership of a registered wine estate, comprising a minimum of 20 ha of established vineyards and a wine making facility of 100 tons.

Four Cornerstones of Membership

1. Technical and Environmental

Members will be able to clearly demonstrate that their wines are crafted taking full cognisance of the importance of its facilities and its impact on the environment.

2. Cellar Door Facilities

Members of the public will be able to visit these CVC estates and enjoy exceptional levels of hospitality.

3. **Ethical Matters**

All members will have a recognised and acknowledged ethical accreditation based on the International Labour Conventions' Ethical Trading Initiative, incorporating South African labour legislation.

4. **Wine Quality**

The Wine Maker will present the Estate's wines to an independent committee and will be required to articulate the uniqueness of the vineyards' terrain and the impact of the winemaking intervention.

Tiers of Wine Classification

Given the objective of establishing South Africa as a leading producer of world-class wines and promoting the Cape's site specific wines, a key factor is the CVC's ability to identify and tier the wines accordingly. Three tiers of classification have been identified:

1. **Site Specific Wines**

Wines that have achieved the highest acclaim within the CVC, originating from specific vineyards and with a proven track record in the market,

2. **Estate Wines**

Wines made from vineyards falling within the description of ownership.

3. **Wine of Origin**

The CVC recognises that in terms of South Africa's Wine of Origin Scheme, members may produce a wine or range of wines bearing the Estate's name that are not an estate wine as defined in the Scheme.

Only Site Specific and Estate Wines may carry full reference to CVC on all packaging and promotional material.

The formal accreditation process will be initiated on 2 January 2014 and an international and local marketing programme will be implemented from the second quarter of 2014.

A more comprehensive description of membership criteria, the tiers of classification and a list of members awaiting accreditation is included in this information pack.