



# NEWSFLASH

ULTRA VALUE WINE CHALLENGE RESULTS 2018/19



## Ultra Value Wine Challenge 2018 – Putting Consumers First!

*We are delighted to present the fourth set of Ultra Value Wine Challenge results. This is the only industry wine competition that assists consumers find the very best wine buys for under R100 per bottle. The Challenge continues to attract strong support, both existing and new, from quality producers and vineyards who have built a reputation for, and who feature, great-value wines.*

‘Wine lovers throughout South Africa are in for a treat! The compelling fact is that this competition produces a set of practical results: They mean a huge amount to real people; wine lovers not keen to splurge big money on their daily enjoyment. The brilliant wines identified below taste great and they are remarkably affordable! They offer delicious, balanced flavours with lovely fruit and body.

***Most importantly, they cost less than R100 per bottle!***

The value sector remains a critical arena in which to offer great quality locally. Wonderfully enjoyable, value-for-money wines, see both vineyards and consumers in a win-win result!

### ***Quality:***

‘It has to be said that judges were really positive about the wine quality in 2018. The wines felt lighter on their feet and in better balance than in prior years. The use of oak was more subtle and there was demonstrably less overt extraction.

Vintages 2017 and 2018 yielded delicious wines with fine concentration and very good typicity. There was a sense of better viticultural practices taking place and perhaps less interventions in the cellars

It is the first time that so many wines at this price point have shown the class the judges generally experienced.

***Congratulations to all our winners. #ValleyOfChampions***

# Judging Sauvignon & Chenin Blanc's

JUDGE CHAIR GINETTE DE FLEURIO:

'This flight showed the commitment of winemakers to making accessible and affordable Sauvignon Blanc's. There were very few wines which were pyrazine-dominated so the overly green (bell pepper) flavours were few and far between confirming that producers are implementing more attentive vineyard management to resolve this. It was an enjoyable flight but it was noted that regionality and terroir-expression have become more difficult to detect as winemakers source in grapes and also sometimes collaboration work in the winery camouflages the typicity. A few stars in the line-up offered pleasing palate weight, breadth and depth of flavour.'

Chenin Blanc category always over-delivers in the below R100 price range. The grape offers a lot of punch at relatively low price points: Beguiling floral and fruity aromas and full-fruited flavour with the best of them exhibiting minerality and complexity on mid palate and length. The line-up included wines which are quite dry to off-dry and some on the sweet side too. Thus a category which altogether offers a lot, for a host of wine lovers wishing for a bit more weight and flavour in a glass of white.'



*"Wine drinkers remain loyal and they are dead-keen to maintain their lifestyles despite tough economic times. So price is key, and the Ultra Value Challenge supports this fully and practically"*

## Vintages:

Wines from vintages 2011 through to 2018 were entered. The majority were from 2016/17/18 years, much as would be expected. 2018 naturally offered a preponderance of young white wines.

With regards to results by vintage, 2015 yielded some high quality red wines earning a total of 12 gongs. 2016, generally a more difficult vintage, enjoyed 37 winning red wines and only 2 white wine winners. 2017 on the other hand earned 92 red wins, with a tally of only 22 white winning wines.

However for 2018, there were 117 white wine wins, as compared to a total number of 10 awarded red wines.



# Judging Chardonnay

JUDGE SPENCER FONDAUMIERE

The quality of the Chardonnays was of a generally very good standard. The 2017's generally showed better than the 2016's and 2018's which was consistent with the vintages. As expected with the category oak was present in most examples. However very pleasingly the wood use was very restrained, and the fruit was the hero in most examples. The panel was delighted to have found several excellent well-made wines in what is generally considered a premium category.'



# Judging Cabernet Sauvignon

GARETH ROBERTSON

Cabernet Sauvignon: 'This category was definitely an improvement from previous years. The wines showed good varietal character, with the majority of the wines being well balanced with good tannin management, making them very accessible and great value for under R100. I firmly believe the winemakers are paying more attention to making the wines more elegant and accessible for the consumers to enjoy.'

# Cultivars & blends results review

What quickly became clear is that single cultivars, in the main, stole the show this year. Of course there were some notable blends too. But, for example, Pinotage showed better than Cape Blends, and Cabernet and indeed Merlot showed better than Bordeaux Blends.

'Sauvignon Blanc achieved a total of 53 awards, up on last year, but only 2 of these were for Double Golds. Chenin gained 40 awards, also up on last year's 35 awards, with 3 Double Golds. Then Chardonnay cracked 18 nods, down on last year, with 2 Double Gold wins. Other white cultivars gained 8 awards with a Beukett and a Colombard gaining Double Gold wins. Other white blends gained a total of only 15 wins, yet achieved 4 Double Gold victories.

As for the red wines, Cabernet led the charge totaling 29 wins overall and sweeping the top board with 6 Double Gold awards. Pinotage followed with 27 awards 3 of which were for Double Gold.

Then Shiraz landed 26 victories and a single Double Gold. Merlot was a thrilling flight gaining a credible 23 wins 3 of which were for Double Gold victories. As for blends, Other Blends and Bordeaux Blends tied with 15 victories each. Then Cape Blends topped out with 9 wins and a single Double Gold. Rhone Blends gained 5 wins and of these 2 were for Double Golds.

Rosé aced the balance with a splendid showing, a tally of 24 gongs of which two were for Double Gold nods. Semi Sweet gained 12 wines; Fortified 8. Natural sweet cracked 7 wins of which 3 were for Double Gold. MCC achieved 6 wins and finally the Port tally was 4 in all.'



## Judging Shiraz

JUDGES CHAIR RICHARD KERSHAW MW

'This tends to be a strong flight priced under R100. The best examples delivered a purity of fruit, decent fruit intensity and had supple yet fleshy tannins. The top wines had a clean and fresh integrated acidity and some had a touch of oak that added interest and complexity but didn't overwhelm the wine. These wines are meant to be drunk over 1-3 years so the wines need to be approachable soon after release. Despite this, a number of wines didn't make it through. These included wines displaying reductive characters; firm unyielding tannins or over-worked musts leading to over-extraction; those where oak elements dominated and those that lacked freshness either through insufficient sulphur or high levels of oxygen at bottling.'

## Judging Pinotage

WAYVE KOLEVSOHN

'This was really a super category packed full of fantastic value wines. The judges noted the clear and intentional elements of freshness, purity and drinkability as common themes within the category of Pinotage this year, which we felt is so important not only for the grape at this price point, but for the stylistic evolution of Pinotage as a whole.'

*"We were delighted with the purity of fruit – lots of vibrant black cherry, raspberry – on the Merlot wines" – Jolette Steyn*



## Judging Merlot

JOLETTE STEYN

'This was a wonderfully strong category this year! We were delighted with the purity of fruit – lots of vibrant black cherry, raspberry – on the Merlot wines. The wines were neither overripe nor jammy exuding freshness, restraint and some savoury notes. The oak on most occasions was also well-integrated to allow the inherent characteristics of the grapes to shine through. It is clear why Merlot is still a clear favourite among local consumers.'

# *Ultra Value Wine Challenge 2018 - The top 14 highest scoring wines:*

1. Stettyn Cellar - Stettyn Stone White 2018. 98/100
2. Fairview - Fairview La Capra Merlot 2017. 98/100
3. Ken Forrester Wines - Petit Cabernet Sauvignon 2017. 96/100
4. Orange River Cellars - Colombard 2018. 96/100
5. Nicholson Smith Agencies - Pandoras Box Bell Pepper Cab Sav NV. 96/100
6. Robertson Winery - Beaukett 2018. 95/100
7. Rhebokskloof Wine Estate - Hillside White 2018. 95/100
8. Louisvale Wines - Stone Road Merlot 2016. 95/100
9. Allée Bleue Wines - Starlette Shiraz Rosé 2018. 94/100
10. Opstal Wines Sixpence Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon 2018. 93/100
11. Darling Cellars - Black Granite Shiraz 2017. 93/100
12. Ridgeback Wines - Lion Hound Cabernet Sauvignon 2017. 93/100
13. Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Alvi's Drift Signature Pinotage Rosé 2018. 93/100
14. Namaqua Wines - Namaqua Cape Vintage 2017. 93/100

## *Comments From Our Winners*

JM CRAFFORD,  
STETTYN STONE  
WHITE  
CHENIN/SAUVIGNON  
2017. 98/100

"This beautiful wine shows the honesty of the Stettyn appellation. This terroir driven wine together with the passion driven winemaking team shapes this easy drinking, affordable wine with attitude.





It gives us great joy to share this with our fellow wine consumer." 'This was really a super category packed full of fantastic value wines. The judges noted the clear and intentional elements of freshness, purity and drinkability as common themes within the category of Pinotage this year, which we felt is so important not only for the grape at this price point, but for the stylistic evolution of Pinotage as a whole.

GERHARD VAN DER  
WATH, OWNER/  
CHAIRMAN OF  
OVERHEX WINES  
INTERNATIONAL



"We are delighted to have been awarded with no less than 10 accolades. It is once again an indicator of our success as a premium wine company that focuses on quality across all price points."

DE WET CELLARS, TERS  
JONCK, MANAGER &  
WINEMAKER:

"To receive thirteen awards from thirteen entries punts a stamp on what the team at De Wet Cellar aims to achieve: Presenting a quality driven wine portfolio to our clients."



ALVI'S DRIFT / DR  
ALVI VAN DER  
MERWE:

*After winning 7 of the top 100 wines in SA earlier this year, the 15 awards we have won at this competition, bears tribute to the passion and dedication to our wonderful team at Alvi's Drift. We are humbled and thankful to be recognised for our efforts"*



# Multiple Winners Include:

- DGB - 28 wins
- **Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - 15 wins**
- **De Wet Cellar - 13 wins**
- Van Loveren Family Vineyards - 12 wins
- Namaqua Wines - 11 wins
- Ultra Liquors - 11 wins
- Orange River Cellars - 10 wins
- **Overhex Wines International - 10 wins**
- Robertson Winery - 10 wins
- Bonnievale Wines - 9 wins
- Koelenhof Wynkelder - 9 wins
- **Stettyn Cellar - 9 wins**
- Swartland Winery - 9 wins
- Fairview - 8 wins
- Nicholson Smith Agencies - 8 wins
- Anthonij Rupert Wyne - 7 wins
- Ken Forrester Wines - 7 wins

# Double Gold Medal Winners

- Stettyn Cellar:  
Stettyn Stone White 2018 98/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar:  
Alvi's Drift Signature Pinotage Rosé 2018 93/100
- Brandvlei Cellar:  
BC Wines Sauvignon Blanc 2018 92/100
- De Wet Cellar- Single Vineyard Chenin Blanc 2017 92/100
- Stettyn Cellar - Stettyn Stone Red 2017 91/100

# Gold Medal Winners:

- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Rondebosch Chenin Blanc 2018 89/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Alvi's Drift Signature Shiraz 2017 89/100
- Stettyn Cellar - Stettyn Family Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc 2018 89/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Alvi's Drift Signature Chardonnay 2018 89/100
- De Wet Cellar - Red Muscadet 2016 88/100
- Stettyn Cellar Stettyn - Family Vineyards Chenin Blanc 2018 87/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Alvi's Drift Signature Pinotage 2017 87/100
- Stettyn Cellar - Stettyn Pinotage 2015 87/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar Rondebosch - Chardonnay 2018 87/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Alvi's Drift 221 Special Cuvee 2017 86/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Rondebosch Cabernet Sauvignon Shiraz 2017 86/100
- Brandvlei Cellar - BC Wines Chenin Blanc 2018 86/100
- Overhex Wines International - Mensa Cabernet Sauvignon 2017 85/100

# Gold Winners

## Cont.../

- Stettyn Cellar - Stettyn Cellar Chardonnay & Pinot Noir 2018 85/100
- Brandvlei Cellar - BC Wines Cabernet Sauvignon 2018 85/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Alvi's Drift Signature Cabernet Sauvignon 2017 85/100
- Overhex Wines International - Balance Classic Sauvignon Blanc Semillon 2018 85/100
- De Wet Cellar Sauvignon Blanc 2018 85/100

## Silver Medal Winners:

- De Wet Cellar - Special late harvest 2016 84/100
- De Wet Cellar - Merlot Cabernet Sauvignon 2017 84/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Alvi's Drift Signature Chenin Blanc 2018 84/100
- De Wet Cellar - Chenin Blanc 2018 83/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Alvi's Drift Signature Sauvignon Blanc 2018 83/100
- Overhex Wines International - Balance Winemaker's Selection Sauvignon Blanc 2018 83/100

Overhex Wines International Balance Winemaker's Selection Pinot Noir 2017 83/100

- New Cape Wines - Eagle's Cliff Shiraz Rosé 2018 83/100
- Stettyn Cellar Stettyn - Cabernet Sauvignon 2016 83/100
- De Wet Cellar - Pettilant Fronte NV 83/100
- De Wet Cellar - Cape Blend 2016 83/100
- Brandvlei Cellar - BC Wines Pinotage 2017 82/100
- Overhex Wines International - Balance Classic Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot 2017 82/100
- De Wet Cellar - Cabernet Sauvignon 2016 81/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Alvi's Drift Signature Viognier 2018 81/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar -Cape Pride Chenin Chardonnay 2018 81/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Cape Pride Cabernet Sauvignon Shiraz 2016 81/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar Alvi's Drift Signature Merlot 2017 81/100
- Overhex Wines International - Balance Classic Shiraz Rosé 2018 80/100
- Overhex Wines International - Balance Winemaker's Selection Shiraz 2017 80/100
- Overhex Wines International - Balance Winemaker's Selection Chenin Blanc 2018 80/100
- De Wet Cellar - Cravate MCC 2011 80/100
- New Cape Wines - Eagle's Cliff Sauvignon Blanc 2018 80/100
- De Wet Cellar - Shiraz 2017 80/100



# Silver Winners

## Cont.../

- De Wet Cellar - Chardonnay 2017 80/100
- Overhex Wines International - Balance Winemaker's Selection Cab Sauvignon 2017 80/100
- Overhex Wines International - Mensa Sauvignon Blanc 2018 80/100
- De Wet Cellar - Hanepoot 2017 79/100
- Stettyn Cellar - Stettyn Shiraz 2016 79/100
- Alvi's Drift Private Cellar - Alvi's Drift 221 Chenin Blanc 2018 79/100
- Stettyn Cellar - The Guardian 2015 77/100

*MCC Labels South Africa's Managing Director, Rian Moore, commented: 'Value describes the intersection between quality and price – and remains a crucial aspect of wine marketing. We're pleased to underscore our commitment to the wine industry by supporting this value-driven competition.'*

**Result summaries: \* Double Gold Medals \* 38 Gold Medal Winners 109 \* Silver Medal Winners 203**

**#ValleyOfChampions**