



A TOAST TO EXCELLENCE: WINE HARVEST COMMEMORATIVE EVENT HONOURS FIVE LUMINARIES FOR THEIR LASTING INFLUENCE

On Thursday, 6 February 2025, the annual Wine Harvest Commemorative Event honoured the achievements of five remarkable individuals in the South African wine industry for their exemplary standards worthy of emulation. This prestigious gathering has become a cherished tradition within the South African wine community, encouraging excellence and marking the pivotal birth date of South African wine 366 years ago in 1659—when wine was pressed for the first time from Cape grapes.

“We are delighted to, once again, host the Wine Harvest Commemorative Event at Groot Constantia, the oldest wine-producing farm in South Africa. As we celebrate the birthday of the South African wine industry and bless this year’s harvest at the event, we also honour individuals and organisations who have made extraordinary contributions to the industry. This year’s honourees reflect the strength of the SA wine industry and showcase the resilience and adaptability of South African wine in a very competitive global market,” says Clifford van der Venter, chairman of the Groot Constantia Trust. “The occasion represents not only the culmination of hard work and dedication but also a celebration of the vibrant community that defines our wine heritage.”

The 2025 recipients are in keeping with the exceptional leaders that have been acknowledged and praised in previous years and include **Johann Krige**, who received the 1659 Award for Visionary Leadership; **Praisny Dlamini** in the Growing Inclusivity category; **Bennie Howard** in the Wine Advancement category; and **Jan Booysen** in the Viti- and Viniculture category. The inaugural recipient in the new Wine Agri-Worker category was **Marcus Lewis**.

Johann Krige: 1659 Award for Visionary Leadership

Johann Krige received the esteemed 1659 Award for Visionary Leadership in recognition of his substantial contributions to the South African wine industry. Known for his proactive leadership and transformative ideas, Krige has consistently driven progress rather than merely anticipating it.

After beginning his career in law, Krige pivoted to winemaking, earning an MBA from Stellenbosch University before joining the family winery, Kanonkop Wine Estate, in 1990. His strategic focus on red wine varieties, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinotage, Merlot, and Cabernet Franc, established Kanonkop as a global luminary. Notable achievements include winning the Robert Mondavi Trophy in London four times and achieving a historic 100-point score from international wine critic Tim Atkin for the 2015 Kanonkop Paul Sauer—marking this the first-ever perfect score in the New World.

Krige’s pioneering efforts have elevated Pinotage as a distinguished South African wine on the global stage. Beyond his winemaking expertise, he has served on boards such as Stellenbosch Wine Routes, Wines of South Africa, and SAWIS.

With his personal pioneering philosophy of ‘back to the future’, Krige’s role as a game-changer has significantly shaped the South African wine industry and its standing in the international market, making him a laudable recipient of this honour.

Praisny Dlamini: Growing Inclusivity

Praisny Dlamini, honoured for her leadership and dedication to promoting inclusivity, has transformed Adama Wines into a beacon of diversity. Her journey from KwaZulu-Natal to

becoming the first woman Protégé of the Cape Winemakers Guild highlights her commitment to breaking barriers of gender, race, and socioeconomic status.

Under Dlamini's leadership, Adama Wines has grown into a symbol of empowerment for young black women in the wine industry. By allocating 2% of its profits to a bursary scheme, Adama Wines provides vital financial support to aspiring professionals. This initiative not only fosters talent but also ensures that future generations can forge meaningful careers in winemaking and other sectors.

Her achievements extend beyond business. She has led Adama Wines to win numerous accolades, solidifying its reputation as a leader in promoting diversity.

Dlamini exemplifies transformative leadership by pioneering inclusivity in the Cape Wine industry, making her a worthy recipient of this honour.

Bennie Howard: Wine Advancement

Bennie Howard's multi-decade-long commitment to the South African wine industry has earned him the accolade for Wine Advancement. As an influential wine judge, Cape Wine Master, and vice-chair of the SA National Wine Show Association, Howard has crucially enhanced the industry's global reputation through education, competitions, and cultural promotions.

Howard's career boasts numerous achievements. Since 2004, he has been the Marketing Manager at Meerendal Estate in Durbanville. He was instrumental in getting the Wine of Origin Cape Town approved by the demarcation committee and the Wine and Spirit Board in 2017.

In 2020, Howard became the first recipient of the Dave Hughes Award, acknowledging his exceptional contributions to wine education. His mentorship of young winemakers and dedication to promoting the cultural heritage of South African wine have left a lasting impact on the industry, securing his legacy as a champion of its progress.

Howard's role as a trailblazer has significantly shaped the South African wine industry, making him an admirable recipient of this honour.

Jan Booysen: Viti- and Viniculture

Jan Booysen's innovative approach has significantly influenced the South African wine industry. With expertise honed through roles at ARC Infruitec-Nietvoorbij, Booysen has advanced research, technology, and training in viticulture.

Booyesen's contributions extend to shaping policies and practices that benefit both local and international wine industries. As Executive Director of WINETECH, he spearheaded groundbreaking research projects that improved vineyard productivity and sustainability. His leadership has also been pivotal in the development of training programmes that equip the next generation of viticulturists with cutting-edge knowledge and skills.

Internationally, Booysen served as a Technical Advisor at the International Office of Vine and Wine (OIV), where he contributed to global policies on wine production. His accolades, including the Veritas Scroll of Honour and the National Science and Technology Forum Awards, underscore his profound impact on the wine sector.

Booyesen's pioneering spirit and ability to unite stakeholders has led to transformative advancements in the South African wine industry, making him a deserving recipient of this honour.

Marcus Lewis: Wine Agri-Worker

Marcus Lewis was selected by the Western Cape Department of Agriculture as part of their annual Western Cape Prestige Agri Awards competition as the inaugural Wine Agri-Worker.

The initiative honours the invaluable efforts of vineyard, cellar, and farm workers, who are instrumental to the success of South Africa's wine industry.

Currently cellar foreman at Kanonkop Wine Estate, Lewis embodies excellence in the vital role of agri-workers. His career includes over a decade of accomplishments and technical expertise with highlights including being selected for the Burgundy France Cellar Worker Exchange Programme in 2015; winning the Western Cape Prestige Agri Awards in the Stellenbosch Region three times in 2018, 2019, and 2024; and ongoing contributions to cellar operations, harvest management, and staff training.

Lewis's passion inspires the South African wine industry community, and he is a fitting recipient of this honour.

Partnering for Success to Celebrate 366 Years of South African Wine

The Wine Harvest Commemorative Event 2025 was made possible by the generous support of Groot Constantia, Standard Bank, Air France-KLM, Western Cape Department of Agriculture, South Africa Wine, Wesgro, Die Burger, Cape Town Tourism, MCC Labels, and Seabourne Logistics.

Highlighting the economic significance of the wine industry, Brendan Jacobs, Standard Bank Head: Agribusiness, states, "As we mark over 10 years of our involvement with the Wine Harvest Commemorative Event, Standard Bank remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting the agribusiness sector. The South African wine industry is not only a cornerstone of our nation's rich agricultural heritage but also a vital contributor to our economy. At Standard Bank, we are committed to growing businesses by providing relevant and targeted solutions and by championing events such as the Wine Harvest Commemorative Event, we are investing in a future where our local farmers and producers can continue to thrive on a global stage. Our dedication to agribusiness and the South African wine industry reflects our belief in its power to drive sustainable economic growth and foster innovation within the industry."

Western Cape Government Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism, Dr Ivan Meyer, expressed delight at their association with the South African wine industry and the Wine Harvest Commemorative Event. This year's occasion was notably significant due to the introduction of the Wine Agri-Worker category.

"The SA wine industry is vibrant, sustainable, innovative, resilient, and one of the cornerstones of the Western Cape, and South African, agricultural sector," says Meyer. "In 2023, the Western Cape Government embarked on a resolute journey by adopting the Growth for Jobs (G4J) Strategy. This strategic framework is our unwavering commitment to steer the provincial economy towards break-out growth, creating a jobs-rich, inclusive, sustainable, diverse, and resilient environment by 2035. Together, we are working towards growing the economy, creating jobs, and a safe Western Cape while promoting the well-being and dignity of its citizens. Over the last 366 years, the wine industry has overcome many challenges and, through visionary leadership, such as this annual event, developed into an iconic sector with strong linkages to tourism."

"This event not only celebrates excellence in the winemaking industry but also the innovation, resilience, and passion of producers in the region," says Wrenelle Stander, CEO at Wesgro. "South Africa's wines are a global treasure, and our five wine regions play an integral role in contributing to the region's economy," says Stander.

This February, as we raise our glasses to excellence, let us celebrate the rich heritage and achievements of South African wine, sharing our joyous wishes with the world. Follow @sawineharvest on social media and use the hashtag **#HappyBirthdaySAWine** to join the celebration and discover more about this remarkable event and the 2025 honourees at www.sawineharvest.co.za.

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CAPTION:

6 February 2025 – Groot Constantia, Cape Town – At the 2025 Wine Harvest Commemorative Event, five wine industry pioneers were honoured, and the event's leading sponsors gathered to celebrate the 366th anniversary of the start of the South African Wine Industry.

Back (L-R): Clifford van der Venter (Groot Constantia Trust), Eulalia Fernandes (Air France-KLM), Willem Jordaan (Die Burger), Claude le Roux (Seabourne Logistics), Dr Ilse Trautmann (Department of Agriculture), Reghardt Strauss (Standard Bank), Wrenelle Stander (Wesgro), Rico Basson (South Africa Wine), Tracy Mkhize (Cape Town Tourism), Flip Snyman (MCC Labels).

Front (L-R): Bennie Howard (Wine Advancement), Praisyl Dlamini (Growing Inclusivity), Johann Krige (1659 Award for Visionary Leadership), Jan Booysen (Viticulture & Viniculture), Marcus Lewis (Wine Agri-Worker).

The distinguished sponsors were pivotal in supporting this celebration, ensuring the acknowledgement of those who have made significant contributions to the industry.

Images link	COPY THIS LINK AND PASTE INTO YOUR BROWSER: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mlW0spYc_aXSeEmyFvU990JBtXM9KbpT?usp=sharing
Social Media Post Sample	<i>A Toast to Excellence! On February 6, 2025, the Wine Harvest Commemorative Event took place at the historic Groot Constantia, honoring five luminaries for their significant contributions to the South African wine industry. This event not only celebrated their achievements but also marked an impressive 366 years since the first Cape grapes were pressed into wine. Cheers to Johann Krige, Praisyl Dlamini, Bennie Howard, Jan Booysen, and Marcus Lewis for their remarkable impact and lasting influence on this vibrant sector! Join the celebration with #HappyBirthdaySAWine!</i>
INTERVIEWS	Carmen@fusiondesign.co.za or WhatsApp 24/7 on 082 825 5715
90 word summary	A Toast to Excellence: Wine Harvest Commemorative Event Celebrates Five Luminaries On Thursday, 6 February 2025, the annual Wine Harvest Commemorative Event celebrated five exceptional individuals in the South African wine industry for their outstanding contributions. This prestigious event, marking 366 years since the first wine was pressed from Cape grapes in 1659, has become a cherished tradition, promoting excellence within the community. Hosted at Groot Constantia, South Africa's oldest wine farm, the event honoured Johann Krige for Visionary Leadership, Praisyl Dlamini for Growing Inclusivity, Bennie Howard for Wine Advancement, Jan Booysen for Viti- and Viniculture, and Marcus Lewis, the inaugural Wine Agri-Worker honouree. Use the hashtag #HappyBirthdaySAWine to join this unique South African celebration!

