

## Great things expected from Oranjerivier wines following competition

The eighth Tops at Spar/Country Cellars and Oranjerivier Wine Cellars Wine Competition took place in Upington on 26 October 2009. Winemakers from Oranjerivier's five wineries at Upington, Keimoes, Groblershoop, Grootdrink and Kakamas, each enter specific wines for judging by a panel of experts.

This year's panel included Tinus van Niekerk, one of South Africa's foremost wine experts and consultant to Tops at Spar, Joaquim Sa from cork company Amorim, journalists Neil Pendock and Fiona McDonald, retailer Caroline Rillema and winemakers Guy Webber and Abé Beukes from Stellenzicht.

Out of the 12 awards made, the grand winner of this year's competition was George Kruger from the Kakamas Winery. Kruger won the Country Cellars Award for Champion Winemaker, as well as the Great Gariep and Aukarabis Awards for Best White Cultivar Wine and Best Red Cultivar Wine respectively. The winning white wine was a Chenin Blanc 2009 and the red a Shiraz 2009. The Spar Award for Champion Wine Cellar went to the Keimoes Cellar.

### Quality improves

At the awards function the judges were unanimous in commenting on the improvement in quality from wines emanating from the Northern Cape. "This year really amazed me with the general quality of the winemaking and the fruit expression in the wines," said Neil Pendock. "My advice to the winemakers is to put some of these red wines away for two years and enter them into some of South Africa's premier competitions, such as Veritas. You are going to stun your southern colleagues and wine consumers who still doubt the quality of the Oranjerivier's wines."

Ray Edwards, CEO of Tops at Spar, says the competition underscores the important relationship between Oranjerivier Wine Cellars and the company. "Oranjerivier is a major supplier of wines to our in-house Country Cellars wine range, with the business relationship being in the region of R27 million rand over the past year," said Edwards. "This competition between the region's wineries has become an important incentive for the winemakers and grape growers to continuously work towards making the best wines the area is capable of and showing the rest of the country - and the world - what Oranjerivier is capable of."

### Full list of winners:

Award	Category	Sponsor	Winner/Cellar
Great Gariep Award	Best White Cultivar	Paarl Labels Callie de Wet	George Kruger (Kakamas)
Aukarabis Award	Best Red Cultivar	Collotype Labels Sonja van Rooyen	George Kruger (Kakamas)
Kathu Award	Best White Blended Wine	Mondi Packaging Richard Truter	Jim de Kock (Keimoes)
Kalahari Award	Best Red Blended Wine	Spar SA Ray Edwards	Rianco van Rooyen (Keimoes)
Rienvasmaak Award	Best Classical Muscadet Wine	Polyoak Packaging Wessel Oelofse	Johan Dippenaar (Grootdrink)
Grootdrink Award	Best Matured Wine	M C G Industries Adriaan Cloete	Bolla Louw (Kakamas)
Kokerboom Award	Best Single Vineyard Wine	Industri-bag Shaugh Preiss	Dirk Malan
Kanoneiland Award	Runner-up Best Single Vineyard Wine	Polyoak Packaging Derick Briers	Flip Lochner
NORWECO Award	Champion Assistant - Winemaker	NORWECO Herman Cruywagen	Jim de Kock (Keimoes)
Oranjerivier Award	Runner-up Champion Winemaker	Consol Glass Johan Neethling	Jim de Kock (Keimoes)
Country Cellars Award	Champion Winemaker	SPAR SA Ray Edwards	George Kruger (Kakamas)
Spar Award	Grand Champion Wine Cellar	SPAR SA Ray Edwards	(Keimoes)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>