

Michelangelo Awards now open to RTD beverages

For the first time in South Africa, producers of Ready to Drink (RTD) beverages are invited to enter the Michelangelo International Wine & Spirits Awards, where they will be able to present their products to a panel of acclaimed judges for adjudication.



Michelangelo's founder and organiser of the competition, Lorraine Immelman, explains the decision: "We could no longer ignore the rapidly expanding RTD category. The decision to include RTDs in the competition is a natural follow-on from our expansion in 2014, when Michelangelo first opened the competition to spirits.

"Since then, we have been open and committed to adjudicating all wines and spirits, segmented into every possible variety which now also includes pre-mixes and flavour-infused base spirits. These range from vodka, whisky and brandy to the fast-growing segments of gin, rum and tequila."

Consumer trends drive category growth

While RTD beverages have been around in South Africa since 1996, the first RTDs to be locally produced emerged in 2003 when Klipdrift developed a limited run of pre-mixed brandy and Coke. Its success, coupled with changes in consumer trends, have spurred on a tsunami of colourful RTD offerings in drinks stores around the country.

"With the sale and consumption of alcohol banned under Levels 4 and 5 of lockdown, low- and non-alcohol products in the

RTD category experienced rapid growth and made it top of mind for many consumers. However, while convenience and easy availability are key drawcards, the quality of the can's contents is a major factor," says Immelman.



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Michael Lebona 13 Jan 2020



"Considering their widespread popularity, local producers of RTD products deserve the chance to have their pre-mixed cocktails tasted and awarded by a credible and internationally recognised competition such as the Michelangelo Awards. By entering, producers of RTD beverages can help establish their credibility, while their consumers can make better informed buying decisions," concludes Immelman.

Entries for the Michelangelo International Wine & Spirits Awards close on 31 July 2020. Enter here:

<https://maiwsa.co.za/Entries>

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