

Enter GWC Best of Wine Tourism Awards

The Best of Wine Tourism Awards, established eight years ago to advance standards in wine tourism and to promote the exchange of best-practice internationally, is hosted by the nine-member Great Wine Capitals (GWC) network operating in Africa, Europe, North and South America, and Australasia.



Recent winner of the local Best of Wine Tourism Awards, the Rust en Vrede Estate in Stellenbosch.

Deputy mayor of the Cape Winelands municipality, Clarence Johnson, is urging wineries to start thinking beyond the impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup and to start planning ahead for the tourism that will follow. A former president of the GWC and a member of the Cape chapter of the global network, he was announcing the opening with immediate effect of entries for this year's awards.

"While all tourism providers will obviously make every effort to deliver their very best during the soccer season and benefit the local economy, we also need to be focusing on the steady stream of future visitors to the Cape Winelands," said Johnson.

Life after the games

"They will be coming long after the games to experience the world-class sophistication of our wines and wineries; our heritage and contemporary architecture; our reputation for gastronomic excellence, with three local restaurants voted amongst the San Pellegrino World's Best 100 restaurants in London recently; and our pioneering work in eco-tourism," he added.

CEO of The Business Tourism Company, Rick Taylor, who also helped to create the Best of Wine Tourism Awards, believes the focus of the local wine industry on wine-related tourism has significantly enhanced South Africa's image and cachet as a desirable travel destination. He said it was critical for producers to participate in the annual event to remain conversant with international developments in this highly competitive arena. "The awards play a key role in allowing wineries to benchmark themselves against the best in the world, and thus maintain and grow the country's reputation amongst travellers."

Award categories, prize



Rust en Vrede Estate restaurant interior.

The awards include categories for wine tourism restaurants; accommodation; architecture, parks and gardens; arts and culture; innovative wine tourism experiences; wine tourism services including conferencing; and sustainable wine tourism

practices.

André Morgenthal, local spokesperson for the network, confirmed that for the first time in the history of the awards, an international flight ticket would be awarded to the Cape's overall winning winery to visit one of the GWC members during the course of 2011.

"The intention is for the winner to nominate a staff member who could benefit from a trip to one of the member cities and be exposed to best-practice concepts and projects. The winner will have the choice of city and GWC will develop a suitable educational programme for the person chosen. On their return, they will be required to share what they have learned with their peers."

The category winners will be announced in September and the overall winner from the Cape on 4 November 2010, at the GWC annual general meeting in Christchurch, South Island, New Zealand, to mark that country's joining of the network. In addition to the local chapter, other members of the network include Bilbao-Rioja (Spain), Bordeaux (France), Florence (Italy), Mainz (Germany), Mendoza (Argentina), Porto (Portugal) and San Francisco-Napa (United States).

Winners, entries

The most recent overall winner of the local Best of Wine Tourism Awards was the restaurant of the Rust en Vrede Estate in Stellenbosch, also voted one of the top two winery restaurants globally.

The closing date for the submission of entries is Thursday 3 June 2010. Entry forms can be downloaded by going to bit.ly/9NY1Ad. Entries must be submitted to the Best of Wine Tourism secretariat, Belinda Lamprecht at specialt@iafrica.com or by telephoning her on +27 (0) 21 418 2302 to arrange delivery. For details about the awards go to the Great Wine Capitals website at www.greatwinecapitals.com.

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