

# Exceptional wine service from Bollinger award winner

The Bollinger Exceptional Wine Service Award, a joint initiative between Vinimark The Wine Company and The Reciprocal Wine Trading Company, has announced this year's winner, who is Gareth Ferreira, a Sommelier at the Saxon Hotel in Johannesburg.



He received the Riedel Glass Trophy and a trip to France including a visit to the prestigious Champagne House of Bollinger, including airfare and accommodation in Champagne.

Ferreira was pitted against Angie Langlands, Sommelier at The Oyster Box Hotel in Umhlanga Rocks, KwaZulu Natal and Cashias Gumbo, Sommelier at La Colombe Restaurant in Constantia, Western Cape at the time and now at the Saxon Hotel in the finals where they were faced with a testing day of written exams, a blind tasting and a rigorous practical assessment.

This year's judges were Ginette de Fleuriot (organiser of The Bollinger Exceptional Wine Service Award, a Cape Wine Master and Marketing Manager at Vinimark The Wine Company), Higgo Jacobs (Sommelier and Consultant and a Senior Judge at the International Wine Challenge (IWC), as well as the General Secretary and a founding member of the South African Sommelier Association [SASA]) and Neil Grant (Chairman of SASA and Sommelier and co-owner of Burrata Restaurant in the Old Biscuit Mill, Woodstock, Cape Town).

De Fleuriot was very pleased with the overall results, "Gareth Ferreira is a very worthy winner of this competition, having taken on the challenge to conscientiously hone his skills, which enabled him to perform with excellence at this competition."

Ferreira began his food and beverage training at The Ritz-Carlton in Florida, USA, before being transferred to Doha, Qatar. His first opportunity to work as a wine professional was when he became Assistant Food and Beverage Manager at the Saxon Hotel in Johannesburg. During this time he represented South Africa in the international finals of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs Young Sommeliers Competition in Athens, Greece in 2011, and also passed his introductory and certified sommelier exams with the Court of Master Sommeliers UK.

In 2012, Ferreira become one of a 10-man international sommelier team at the Burj Al Arab in Dubai, and passed his advanced level sommelier certification with the Court of Master Sommeliers UK. He then returned to the Saxon Hotel to take up the position of Head Sommelier and Beverage Manager. He has judged many sommelier and wine competitions such as the national *Chaîne des Rôtisseurs* Young Sommeliers Competition, the WOSA Sommelier Cup and the IWC (International Wine Challenge). He has just taken up a brand new position in London.

For more information, go to [www.wineserviceaward.co.za](http://www.wineserviceaward.co.za).

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