

Smaller SA harvest to result in intensely flavoured 2016 vintages



By [Anna-Bet Stemmet](#) 13 May 2016

Good day fellow wine lovers. We've promised to keep you informed of the most interesting happenings in the local and international wine industry each week, and we've kept true to our word. Here are a few of the most exciting things that happened in the world of wine this week.

El Nino weather phenomenon affects 2016 SA harvest yield

The gist of it: It has been reported that South Africa's grape crop yield will, on average, be just shy of 7% smaller this year when compared to the 2015 harvest. Francois Viljoen, manager of VinPro's viticulture consultation service, said: "Although the crop is smaller, the industry still managed to reach higher productions than initially expected following a season characterised by abnormal heat and water shortages."

South Africa, noted as the world's seventh-largest producer of wine, had the driest year recorded since 1904, but there is still cause for optimism. The smaller berries produced will lead to good colour and intense flavour in this year's red wines, VinPro said. "The white wines also appear surprisingly good, with great structure and good flavours."

Further afield the Burgundy region has suffered the worst frost conditions since 1981, which reduced their bud break by up to 80% in severe cases. This is the seventh bad vintage this region has suffered in a row. Read more [here](#).



The morning after frost in Burgundy, April 2016. Credit: Frederic Billet / @fredericbillet1

Bonus factoid: Dryland farming, a non-irrigation agricultural approach that has been used by Swartland farmers for decades, is now gaining popularity in the US and further afield. Read more about this environmentally-friendly vineyard practice [here](#).

Simonsig took three awards at the Top 100 Wines Competition

The gist of it: 2016 Juliet Cullinan Standard Bank Wine Festival exhibitor [Simonsig](#) took three awards for wines from its Malan Family Selection in this year's Top 100 Wines Competition, including one wine adjudged Best in Class. Simonsig Frans Malan 2014 (a blend of Pinotage, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, named after Simonsig's founder) topped the Cap

Blend Class. Read more about the outcome of the National Wine Challenge incorporating Top 100 SA Wines [here](#).



Bonus factoid: The late Frans Malan, beloved patriarch of the Malan Family and one of the pioneers of the South African wine industry, was not only a craftsman of superior wines, but also introduced groundbreaking innovations including co-founding the Stellenbosch Wine Route and producing South Africa's first Méthode Cap Classique, a bottle fermented sparkling wine made in the style of French champagne

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New research reveals that yeast microbes play a big role in regional wine variation

The gist of it: It was previously accepted that wines produced from the same variety of grape by different vineyards draw their singular geographic signature only from environmental factors, such as local soil conditions, climate and agricultural practices. But now new research by the University of Lincoln, UK, and the University of Auckland, New Zealand, has revealed how sub-populations of the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* yeast microbe (the main microbe involved in the fermentation process) affects the flavour and aroma of a wine.

The researchers investigated six different populations of the yeast from six major wine growing regions in New Zealand. Using Sauvignon Blanc grapes, they found that concentrations of 39 different compounds derived from yeast during the fermentation process affect the flavour and aroma of wine; 29 of these compounds vary depending on which region the yeast originated from. Read more [here](#).



This week's Weekly Wine Wrap-up was brought to you by Juliet Cullinan Wines. The 26th annual [Juliet Cullinan Standard Bank Wine Festival](#) will be hosted on 12 and 13 July, 2016, at Summer Place, Hyde Park, Joburg. Tickets are available at [Webtickets](#).

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