

## Diners Club Winemaker of Year announced

The 2011 Diners Club Winemaker of the Year is Johan Jordaan, senior winemaker at Spier Wines since 2007. The Diners Club Young Winemaker of the Year is Matthew van Heerden of Uva Mira Vineyards.



(L - R) Matthew van Heerden and Johan Jordaan

This year participants in the Winemaker of the Year competition were judged for their Bordeaux-style red blends while young winemakers competed for the title with dry white wines.

Jordaan won for his 2009 Spier Creative Block 5, a blend of the five classical varietals that make up the Bordeaux-style blend. His was chosen from 110 entries, among the highest number yet received for the Winemaker of the Year. In addition to the trophy, he also receives a return ticket to any wine-producing country in the world plus a R50 000 travel allowance.

Matthew van Heerden won for his 2009 Uva Mira Chardonnay, a single-vineyard wine of which 50% was aged for 11 months in new French oak. His entry was selected from 64 entries and included a cash prize of R25000.

Chair of the judging panel, Dave Hughes, said, "The winning wines in this year's competition are both absolutely world-class. The fact that both are from the 2009 vintage confirms the excellence of that year for winemaking. It is probably our top vintage of the past 15 years."

Other members of the judging panel were Vincent Lignac, a sixth-generation winemaker from St Émilion and this year's international judge; wine judge and commentator Neil Pendock; Carrie Adams, wine judge and specialist liquor retailer; Margaret Fry, Cape Wine Master; Colin Frith, wine judge and honorary Cape Wine Master and Ntsiki Biyela, winemaker for Stellakaya Winery.