



## CONSISTENCY AND QUALITY ARE SOUTH AFRICA'S HALLMARKS AT DECANTER WORLD WINE AWARDS 2023

*Winemaking diversity and high quality are markers of South Africa's  
performance at Decanter World Wine Awards 2023*

7 JUNE: After two weeks of rigorous judging, full results from Decanter World Wine Awards 2023 are released today – and South Africa has proved itself to be a wine-producing nation of consistent high quality and admirable diversity.

This year's Decanter World Wine Awards (DWWA) celebrates its 20th year. Since its inception two decades ago, DWWA has consolidated its reputation as the largest and most influential wine competition in the world, acclaimed for its rigorous judging process. Over the course of two weeks in April and May, 236 judges (including 16 Master Sommeliers and 53 Masters of Wine) from 30 countries tasted, debated and compared the relative merits of 18,250 wines of various styles from 57 countries, making this year's competition the largest yet.

South Africa, proving its credentials as a wine-producing nation of quality and diversity, was awarded 595 medals, including two Best in Show and four Platinum medals. In context, only a total of 50 wines, less than 0.3% of all wines entered, were awarded the highly sought-after accolade of Best in Show, and just 125 wines (.68% of total wines tasted) were awarded esteemed Platinum medals.

The two producers awarded Best in Show were **La Riche Wines** for its **Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2020** from Stellenbosch, which judges described as "a perfect combination of weight, muscle and energy – every inch the athlete", and **Iona, Highlands Chardonnay, Elgin 2021**, which judges praised as "lean, shapely, intense: a cool waterfall of Chardonnay fruits".

In terms of regionality, these two Best in Show winners from Elgin and Stellenbosch set the agenda for South Africa's DWWA performance this year. Cool-climate Elgin, a high-sited, mountain-fringed zone in the Cape's deep, ocean-cooled south, hit the big time this year. In addition to its Best in Show (last awarded in 2017), the region swept up a Platinum for **Neil Ellis Wines, Whitehall Chardonnay 2021** and turned in its best-ever Gold performance (four medals), including two from **Paul Cluver (Noble Late Harvest Riesling 2021 and Seven Flags Chardonnay 2021)**.

Perhaps not unexpectedly, Stellenbosch also turned in a strong, harmonious performance. In addition to its Best in Show, this classic heartland region claimed one Platinum for **Rust en Vrede, 1694 Classification 2018**, a Syrah/Cabernet blend with an "expressive nose displaying lively scents of spices, mingled with blue and black fruit", and 11 Golds. Overall, Bordeaux-style reds had a good showing, with **Warwick Wine Estate's Trilogy 2020** from



Simonsberg-Stellenbosch, **Ernie Els Wines Signature 2017** from Helderberg and **Jordan Wine Estate's The Long Fuse Cabernet Sauvignon 2021** all awarded Gold medals and 95 points.

Waving the flag for South Africa's sparkling wines, boutique producer **Quoin Rock** claimed two Golds for its **Black Series Brut 2017** from Western Cape and **Black Series MCC Brut 2015** from Cape South Coast, two well-crafted Chardonnay/Pinot Noir blends.

Elsewhere, **Diemersdal Wine Estate, The Journal Sauvignon Blanc 2022** is a wine to make Durbanville proud as Cape Town's first-ever Platinum medal win, and from Citrusdal Mountain, **Piekenierskloof's Grenache Blanc 2022** was awarded a Gold – the region's first for varietal Grenache Blanc. Displaying "lovely harmony of fruit on the palate and a creamy texture," this 95-point wine offers exceptional value at less than £15 a bottle.

This Value Gold is in addition to four more, demonstrating South Africa's ability to deliver top quality wines at a variety of price points. Among them, **Nederberg** was awarded two Value Golds for its **The Winemasters Chardonnay 2022** and **The Winemasters Cabernet Sauvignon 2021**, both from the Western Cape.

DWWA Co-Chair Michael Hill Smith commented:

"Decanter World Wine Awards has evolved through time, but it's still kept to its core principle of regions being judged by regional specialists. What I've really enjoyed is that mixture of the old and the bold. There's a nice mixture of experience and enthusiasm and youth, and I really enjoyed that."

Visit [awards.decanter.com](https://awards.decanter.com) for a full list of winners.

## ENDS

The Decanter World Wine Awards Co-Chairs and key spokespeople are available for interviews. Please use the contact details below to arrange.

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### **Notes to editors:**

South Africa was awarded a total of 595 medals, with two Best in Show, four Platinum, 30 Gold, 249 Silver and 310 Bronze.

The following wines won South Africa's Best in Show and Platinum medals (all 97 points).

Best in Show:

- Highlands Chardonnay, Iona, Elgin 2021
- Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Le Riche Wines, Stellenbosch 2020

Platinum:

- Bellingham Wines, Freda The Founder Series, Coastal Region 2021
- Diemersdal Wine Estate, The Journal Sauvignon Blanc, Durbanville, Cape Town 2022
- Neil Ellis Wines, Whitehall Chardonnay, Elgin 2021
- Rust en Vrede, 1694 Classification, Stellenbosch 2018

### **About DWWA**

Launched in 2004 and now in its 20th year, the Decanter World Wine Awards (DWWA) is the world's largest and most influential wine competition.

Decanter - the world's leading wine media brand - has a trusted relationship with an international audience of both consumers and trade that sets DWWA apart from other competitions. Sustainability is a key focus for the DWWA team. All plastic and cardboard is collected and recycled, while every bottle is crushed and remelted, ready to be remade into usable glass within 30 days. All leftover wine is also collected, recycled and sold back into the national grid as gas.

### **About Decanter**

Decanter is the world's leading wine media brand with a total monthly reach in excess of 2 million via its print, digital and social channels. It has a unique place in the world wine market, with authoritative tastings and highly knowledgeable expert contributors making it a must-read, both online and in its high-quality monthly print magazine. Decanter was launched in 1975, making it one of the publishing world's enduring success stories.