



VIII Festival of South African Wines in Moscow Metropol Hotel, 25 April 2017

Export of South African packaged wines to Russia shows phenomenal growth! In the period from April 2016 to March 2017 it reached **4.4 million litres**, which is 2.4 times higher than in the corresponding period of the previous year. This places Russia in the Top 10 export markets for packaged South African wines and makes it the fastest growing market by far. The nearest competitors are Switzerland and Estonia with volumes of less than a million litres each and growths of 14%.

Total supplies of wine from South Africa to Russia (including bulk) increased to **32.6 million litres** in the same period, which is 1.7 times higher than in the previous year and positions Russia as the third biggest buyer of South African wines overall! At the same time, import from South Africa takes only 2% of the total Russian wine imports, providing high potential for a further increase of the market share.

This outstanding achievement provided a favourable background for the annual celebration of South African wines. **The VIII Festival of South African Wines in Moscow (FSAW 2017)** took place at the Metropol Hotel on 25 April. Located just a few steps away from the Kremlin and the Red Square, Metropol is arguably the most well-known historic venue at the very heart of the Russian capital.

Over 35 South African wine brands were presented on 16 wine tasting stations. The main idea of the Festival is to show the complete range of South African wines which are available in Russia. Therefore, the majority





of wines were presented by local importers which enthusiastically demonstrated their portfolios to the professional audience. The importers' line-up was boasting with renowned names: **Alianta, Arsenal, AST-International Environment, Caudal, Eurowine, Ladoga, LaVina, Luding, Millenium, OKB, Simple, Sommelier**, and **Super-Wine.ru**. Among famous South African wines presented were **Bellingham, Boschendal, Fairview, Flagstone, Kaapzicht, KWV, L'Avenir, Nederburg** and many many others. Some producers, such as *Johan de Wet* of **DeWetshof**, *Chris Saager* of **Eikendal** and *Garreth Anderson* of **DGB**, joined their distributors to assist in presenting their fine products.

A separate section in the middle of the hall was formed by winemakers who did not have distribution in Russia yet. Their representatives came to Moscow to meet importers and to discuss potential cooperation. These companies were ranging from large corporations and estates to boutique wineries: **Aaldering, De Grendel, Laibach, Nelson** and **Stellenbosch Vineyards**. The fact that two producers – **Eikendal** and **Bolland Cellars** - had signed deals with distributors after participating in the previous Festival provided a lot of confidence and hope to the newcomers.

All participants reported great interest to their wines. Many SA representatives were also impressed with the extensive professional knowledge of the visitors and smart questions they were asking. Festival guests were very enthusiastic about both new and well familiar wines. Over 800 applications were received to attend the Festival and almost 600 visitors passed through the doors of Onegin Hall. Over 50 representatives of the participating companies and the organizers were also added to the numbers.



The following major professional groups were among the Festival attendees:

- 🚩 representatives of wine retail - 29%;
- 🚩 representatives of hotels & restaurants (HoReCa) - 23%;
- 🚩 representatives of wholesale, import and distribution companies - 20%;
- 🚩 wine marketing specialists - 6%;
- 🚩 educators, students, and graduates of sommelier schools and courses - 6%;
- 🚩 wine journalists & mass media - 5%;
- 🚩 others (including diplomats, representatives of governments departments, etc.) - 11%.



Organizers commit a lot of effort to filtering and verifying applications during the registration procedure. There is a clear understanding that the quality of the attendees takes precedence over quantity.

Festival guests enjoyed two masterclasses held at the event. The first was presented by *Brandon Smit* of **DeGrendel Estate**, who outlined the rich history and modern winemaking practices of the renowned Durbanville estate. The second masterclass was held by **DGB** representatives who introduced brand **Boschendal** which was recently launched on the Russian market.

It became a good tradition that the Festival is supported and well attended by the diplomats of the Embassy of RSA in Russia. This event was not an exception. Her Excellency Ambassador of South Africa Mrs. **Nomasonto M. Sibanda-Thusi**, accompanied by a number of colleagues, delivered a short welcome to the participants and guests and attended the master-class. Her Excellency specifically noted strengthening ties between the countries, increasing cooperation within BRICS, and cancellation of visas for short-term visits between Russia and South Africa.



The Festival was organized by the **Wine Extreme** agency, with media and administration support provided by **Imperia Vkusa** Publishing House. The event was dedicated to the Freedom Day of South Africa and the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations between South Africa and Russia.



Administration of the Festival expresses the deepest gratitude to all SA producers and their importers who contributed to the success of this celebration! We are also extending our special thanks to all partners and, of course, to all dear guests! We believe that our combined and concerted effort will allow South African wines to gain a well-deserved share in the menus and on the shelves, and in the hearts of Russian consumers!

We trust to see even more excellent wines from the rainbow country at the Festival next year! The information about FSAW-2018 will be published on **Wine Extreme**  page on Facebook and at www.intwinfest.com.

The full photo report of the Festival is available at <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B5VGzh6cDC-UOW13M2phWElsZDQ?usp=sharing>.

