



## VII Festival of South African Wines in Moscow Metropol Hotel, 26 April 2016

The VII annual Festival of South African Wines (FSAW) was held at the Metropol Hotel on 26 April 2016. The Metropol Hotel is arguably the most well-known historic venue at the very heart of the Russian capital. It is located just a few steps away from the Kremlin and the Red Square.

The vaulted ceilings and the luxury interiors of the Onegin hall created the appropriate atmosphere for a white-tablecloth wine tasting. Although the table covers at this tasting were more colourful - in line with the colours of the South African flag and the idea of the Rainbow Nation. The Festival is the true celebration of the history, culture and the life style of South Africa!



Despite of the difficult economic environment South African producers and their importers in Russia responded very actively to the invitation to participate in the Festival. There were 17 tasting stations at which over 35 South African wine brands were presented. All major Russian importers, such as **Alianta, Arsenal, AST International Environment, Eurowine, Fort Wine & Spirits, Kaudal, Ladoga, Luding, Marin Express, Millenium, OKB, Simple, Sommelier and Wine Discovery**, demonstrated their South African wine brands to the professional audience. Among the wines they showed were some of the best South Africa has to offer: **Boekenhoutskloof, Bellingham, Fairview, Kaapzicht, Kanonkop**, and many-many others.



A separate section was formed by winemakers which do not have a distribution in Russia yet. Their representatives came to Moscow to meet Russian importers visiting the Festival and discuss cooperation with potential partners. These were very well known names here too: **Boland Cellars, Eikendal, Klein Parys, Laibach and Spier**.



None of the stands experienced lack of attention. The visitors to the Festival were very enthusiastic about both new and well familiar wines. Over 1 100 applications were received to attend the Festival and almost 600 guests passed through the doors. Over 50 representatives of the participating companies and the organizers were also present. The following major professional groups were among the Festival attendees:



- ✚ representatives of wholesale, import and distribution companies - 20%;
- ✚ representatives of wine retail - 28%;
- ✚ representatives of hotels & restaurants (HoReCa) - 22%;
- ✚ wine marketing specialists - 6%;





- ✚ educators, students and graduates of sommelier schools and courses - 8%;
- ✚ wine journalists & mass media - 5%;
- ✚ others (including diplomats, representatives of governments departments, etc.) - 12%.

More stringent registration procedures were applied this year and the organisers received several positive comments on the quality of the Festival quests. We have been stating for the several past years that it is very important for us to have the right people attending the Festival.



**Johann Krige of Kanonkop, Chris Saager of Eikendal, Yury Kuznecov of Marine Express and Johann de Wet of DeWetshof** presented some unique wines at the seminar "**Signature Cultivars of South Africa: Chenin Blanc & Pinotage**". The seminar which was attended by 35 wine specialists was conducted by the Festival Director Vladimir Gorodkov.

Her Excellency **Ambassador of South Africa Mrs. Nomasonto M. Sibanda-Thusi** delivered a short welcome to the participants and guests of the Festival and attended the seminar. The event was also well attended by diplomats of the Embassies of South Africa, Belgium, Brazil and others.



The Festival was organised by the **Wine Extreme** agency in close cooperation with the **Embassy of South Africa** in Russia and **the Department of Trade and Industry**. Media and administration support was provided by the **Imperia Vkusa** publishing house. As usual the event was dedicated to the Freedom Day of South Africa - the day when the first democratic elections were held in the country 22 years ago.



The celebration was great! And we are hoping that the same as in previous years it will serve to raise the image and to increase the sales of South African wines on the Russian market!

You can see several reviews on the Festival at the Wine Extreme page on Facebook.

The full photo report of the Festival could be found here: <https://goo.gl/photos/redkU9UqZwamzstR9>.

