

Tim Atkin favours two SA vintages with highest honours

British journalist and Master of Wine Tim Atkin has contended, in his seventh annual guide, that the 2015 and 2017 vintages have produced a brilliant series of wines that surpass anything in South Africa's history. Atkin scored his first ever 100-point score in the New World to the 2015 Kanonkop Paul Sauer and 99 points to two whites: 2017 Alheit Vineyards Magnetic North and 2017 Sadie Family 'T Voetpad. "I don't give very high scores lightly," he says, "but these three stunning, world-class wines have earned it."

At a time of political and economic uncertainty, Atkin argues that the wine industry is a cause for national optimism and pride. "The severe, three-year drought reduced yields severely in some regions, but it didn't affect the quality of the wines, especially of the 2015 reds and the 2017 whites."

This year, Atkin singles out Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay, Semillon, white blends, Bordeaux red blends, Cabernet Franc, Cinsault and Syrah for special praise and also comments on the success of the Old Vine Project in drawing attention to the Cape's heritage vineyards. "It's vital that South Africa nurtures, promotes and protects this unique resource," he says. "So many of the country's best wines are sourced from old vines."



Atkin's 2018 South Africa Special Report runs to over 250 pages and is the product of two trips to the Cape this year, as well as further tastings in the UK and Germany, and includes:

- Top wines of the year (white, red, rosé, sweet, fortified and sparkling);
- Scores for nearly 2,000 wines, with retail prices in South African Rand, ranging from R40 to R25,000;
- 1,350+ tasting notes;
- Evocative photos of the Winelands and winemakers;
- His 2018 classification of the 250 best South African wineries.

Atkin has also named his **Overall Wines and Winemakers of the Year**:

- **Winemaker of the Year:** Chris Alheit of Alheit Vineyards
- **Young Winemaker of the Year:** Lukas van Loggerenberg of Van Loggerenberg Wines
- **Grower of the Year:** Basie van Lill
- **Cooperative of the Year:** Klawer Cellars
- **Winemaking Legend:** Jan Boland Coetzee of Vriesenhof
- **Overall White Wine of the Year:** 2017 Sadie Family 'T Voetpad, Swartland
- **Overall Red Wine of the Year:** 2015 Kanonkop Paul Sauer, Stellenbosch
- **Overall Rosé of the Year:** 2017 Raised by Wolves Newlands Pinot Meunier Deon Joubert, Stellenbosch

- **Overall Sparkling Wine of the Year:** 2012 Le Lude Magnum Vintage Cuvée, Western Cape
- **Overall Sweet Wine of the Year:** 2015 Klein Constantia Vin de Constance, Constantia
- **Overall Fortified Wine of the Year:** 2016 De Krans Cape Vintage Reserve, Calitzdorp
- **Red Wine Discovery of the Year:** 2017 Rall Ava Syrah, Swartland
- **White Wine Discovery of the Year:** 2017 Alheit Huilkrans, Citrusdal Mountain
- **Best Value White of the Year:** 2018 Stellenrust Chenin Blanc, Stellenbosch
- **Best Value Red of the Year:** 2016 Zonnebloem SMV, Stellenbosch
- **Best Value Rosé of the Year:** 2018 Oude Kompagnies Post Swanepoel Rosé, Tulbagh
- **Best Value Sparkling Wine of the Year:** Villiera Tradition Brut NV, Western Cape
- **Best Value Sweet Wine of the Year:** 2013 Namaqua Noble Late Harvest, Olifants River
- **Best Value Fortified Wine of the Year:** 2015 Du Toitskloof Red Muscadet, Breedekloof

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