

Tim Atkin releases 2017 South Africa Special Report on Cape wine

Award-winning British journalist and Master of Wine Tim Atkin has released his 2017 South Africa Special Report and notes that the Cape is making the best wines in its 358-year history and that its industry is “dynamic, exciting and still evolving.”



Tim Atkin MW (Image Supplied)

South Africa, he says, is “a match for any other New World country in terms of quality and ahead of the field on value.” Yet he warns that while low prices are good for consumers, such bargains are less beneficial for grape growers and wine producers.

“ *The country needs to charge more for its wines, and we should be prepared to pay for such excellence.* ”

The 2016 vintage, which was one of the hottest and driest on record, was “very tricky”, but Atkin says that the best producers have made some excellent wines. Of his 149 wines of the year, 76 are from 2016. “Don’t write off the harvest,” he advises.

This year, Atkin singles out Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay, Cabernet Franc, Cinsaut, and sparkling Méthode Cap Classique wines for special praise, but adds that “the Cape is capable of making almost any wine style to a very high standard”.

Atkin's 2017 South Africa Special Report runs to over 200 pages and is the product of two trips to the Cape this year, as well as further tastings in the UK and Germany.

Atkin has also named his overall wines and winemakers of the year:

- **Winemakers of the year:** Chris and Andrea Mullineux

- **Young Winemaker of the year:** Mark Le Roux
- **Winemaking Legend:** Neil Ellis
- **Overall White Wine of the Year:** 2016 Sadie Family Kokerboom, Olifants River
- **Overall Red Wine of the Year:** 2015 Beeslaar Pinotage, Stellenbosch
- **Overall Sweet Wine of the Year:** 2012 Mullineux & Leeu Essence, Swartland
- **Overall Fortified Wine of the Year:** 2015 De Krans Cape Vintage Reserve, Calitzdorp
- **Overall Sparkling Wine of the Year:** 2011 Graham Beck Cuvée Clive, Western Cape
- **White Wine Discovery of the Year:** 2016 Rall Ava Chenin Blanc, Swartland
- **Red Wine Discovery of the Year:** 2015 Gabriëlskloof The Landscape Series Cabernet Franc, Bot River
- **Best Value White of the Year:** 2017 Swartland Winery Limited Release Roussanne
- **Best Value Red of the Year:** 2014 Onderkloof Cabernet Franc, Stellenbosch
- **Best Value Sparkling Wine of the Year:** Villiera Tradition Brut NV, Stellenbosch

Tim Atkin MW's 2017 South Africa Special Report is [available to download](#) for £20 or R340.

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