

THE WINE SOCIETY OF INDIA

DISCOVER THE WORLD OF WINES

SOUTH AFRICAN WINE TASTING

March 13, 2008

South Africa is now taking its place as the new-world wine producer with the closest affinity to India. South Africa is not really a new-world producer since wines have been produced there since the 17th century. However, the early successes, particularly Steen (Chenin Blanc), Colombard, and even Pinotage, are now being replaced by varieties for which it is better recognised; Cabernet Sauvignon, Sauvignon Blanc, Shiraz, and cool climate Rieslings and Chardonnays.

Of all the new-world wine producers, South Africa has the closest geographical location to India. Its climate is most similar to India's (at least in Natal), it has a large Indian population, and its spicy food is a direct match to our cuisine – no wonder that its wines are finding favour here!

South Africa success in export markets is testament to responsive wine-making skills, and the declining Rand make these wines a bargain (essential in this country) by international standards.

PRODUCERS

Drostdy-Hof

The Drostdy-Hof Wine Cellar, located close to the historic town of Tulbagh, was established in 1964 and for over three decades has produced wines that have become firm favourites amongst everyday drinkers. This winery, built as the Old Courthouse in 1804, is now a national monument.

Durbanville Hills

Durbanville Hills consists of seven leading vineyard owners located close to the cold Atlantic Ocean and therefore takes advantage of the temperate climate with Atlantic sea breezes cooling the vines during the summer months. These cool hills produce some of South Africa's best Sauvignon Blanc.

Nederburg

Nederburg builds its reputation for classically-styled wines with fruit-rich flavours. Its brand growth is the result of an extensive infrastructure that includes ongoing viticultural research and the implementation of pioneering vineyard practices.

Obikwa

Value-priced range of wines, much appreciated by South African wine lovers. Now being imported to India for the first time.

NOTE: Prices of these wines were unavailable at the time of tasting.

Score / 20

Nederburg Premier Cuvee Brut N/V

Ever reliable and threaded with fragrant citrus. Off-dry and suitable for spicy foods.

12

Nederburg Rose 2007

Lovely pale orangey rosé with soft fruity aromas filled with an abundance of strawberry.

The palate is a lively light to medium-bodied wine with a clean, fruity and refreshing finish.

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Drostdy-Hof Steen Chenin Blanc 2007 Brilliant straw colour with green tinges with a nose of generous aromas of peach, apricot and ripe citrus fruits. The taste is balanced with subtle spices and a hint of vanilla.	10
Obikwa Sauvignon Blanc 2007 A light wine with crisp green apple flavours and touches of guava.	12
Nederburg Manor House Sauvignon Blanc 2007 Brilliant green with hints of gold in colour. Tropical toned with flavours of kiwi, passion fruit, and fig. Full bodied with great balance and an elegant dry finish.	12
Durbanville Hills Sauvignon Blanc – Biesjes Craal 2007 Aromas of gooseberry, asparagus, and nettles. Crisp and fresh with passion fruit ripeness underlined by green pepper and a slight grassiness with a long lingering after taste.	12
Drostdy-Hof Chardonnay Semillon 2007 Light straw colour with an aroma of citrus flavours and a hint of vanilla. The palate is medium-bodied with pronounced citrus and gooseberry flavours and a vanilla oak finish.	13
Nederburg Chardonnay Viognier 2007 Pale yellow with green tinges. The palate is crisp with lemony notes and creamy flavours of the Viognier that are beautifully balanced by the citrus character of the Chardonnay - resulting in a full-bodied, mouth-filling wine.	14
Durbanville Hills Chardonnay 2007 Golden yellow with green specks. The nose is of dried peaches, apricot, citrus and vanilla notes with a soft entry. An easy-drinking wine with a crisp acidity.	12
Drostdy-Hof Cape Red 2007 This ruby red wine has a ripe nose with strawberry and mulberry notes. The taste is medium-bodied, soft and fruity.	10
Durbanville Hills Merlot – Luipaardsberg 2005 The nose is of rich fruit, subtle cherries and oak spices. An easy drinking well-balanced wine with clean soft fruit, oaky backup and gentle tannins.	13
Obikwa Merlot 2007 Fruity and approachable, with berry flavours on both the nose and palate and a smooth lingering finish.	12
Obikwa Cabernet Sauvignon 2007 An easy-drinking wine with berry aromas and ripe, mouth-filling berry flavours.	12
Nederburg House Mansion Cabernet Sauvignon Ruby with red edges with a nose of blackberry plus blackcurrant, chocolate and mocha aromas, tempered by soft oak vanillins. This medium to full-bodied wine tastes of ripe fruit, delicate oak spices and firm tannins.	12
Durbanville Hills Cabernet Sauvignon 2006 Intense ruby red colour, with a nose of fresh berry and grass with shades of green olive and very attractive vanilla spices. The palate is compact with a solid structure still closed with a good tannic backbone.	14
Obikwa Shiraz 2007 Lifted berry flavours are to the fore in this soft, round and dry wine. American Oak adds	13

sweet vanilla spiciness to 06's smokey bacon and chunky fruit. Firm tannins and savoury finish.

Nederburg Shiraz 2006

Dark ruby red with aromas of ripe plums, berries and oak spice with a hint of cigar box. The palate is rich and full-bodied with ripe plums, new leather and a good tannic structure

14

Nederburg Pinotage/Shiraz 2007

Ruby with purple edges. The nose is full of berry fruit with hints of spice and a smokey background. The palate is medium to full-bodied with soft, velvety fruit and a hint on cinnamon and integrated oak flavours.

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