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WINE

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## AFRICAN WINTER WINE FESTIVALS

THE BEST WINE FESTIVALS ACROSS SOUTH AFRICA

BY SANDRA MACGREGOR | MAY 29TH 2012 | 08:42 PM



When winter arrives in South Africa, locals stay toasty with a bevy of wine festivals that help warm the spirit. Here are five of the best:

### Robertson Wacky Wine Weekend

June 7th to 10th

One of the liveliest – and longest – of South Africa's wine festivals, this unique event is a great opportunity to discover the Robertson wine valley, which is rapidly becoming one of the most prominent wine regions in the country. Tutored tastings with wine makers as well as barrel tastings, vineyard tours and food and wine pairings are just some of the events on offer. Be sure to sample the Chardonnays and bubblys, which are among the best in the country.

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### Hermanus Wine and Food Fair

August 9th - 11th

Wine lovers flock to one of South Africa's most picturesque seaside towns (right) to sample over 250 wines from 80 regional wineries. This event (above) features vintages from some of the lesser known, but up-and-coming appellations like Elgin and the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley, which lay claim to having the coldest (and most coveted) microclimates in the country. The Pinot Noir and Chardonnay offerings from Hamilton Russell, Bouchard Finlayson and Paul Cluver wineries, to name a few, consistently garner international rave reviews from such industry icons as *Wine Spectator* magazine. The town of Hermanus offers some of the best land-based whale watching in the world, so be sure put aside time to take in the views.



### Old Mutual Trophy Wine Show Public Tasting

Johannesburg June 8th  
Cape Town, June 15th

Gather together the country's most lauded wine experts and have them choose the crème de la crème from among South Africa's best vintages, and you have a wine lover's version of heaven. All of the wines featured are



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either trophy, gold or silver medal winners, and attendees receive a copy of *ICONS*, a comprehensive review of each of the award-winning wines.

### Cape Winemakers Guild Auction Showcase

Cape Town, 23 August  
Johannesburg 30 August

Probably the most anticipated tasting among South African wine connoisseurs – and the one that draws the most international attention – is this annual event. Winemakers across the country submit wines to be included for auction, and only the very best are chosen. These exclusive vintages, which are never to be sold except at the prestigious yearly auction held in October, are available for the public to enjoy at this unparalleled event.



All images above © Old Mutual Trophy Wine Show

### Franschhoek Uncorked Festival

September 1st - 2nd

What better way to bid adieu to winter than by warming up with some of the country's most premium and award-winning wineries? Oenophiles flock to this charming town as the region's vineyards open their doors for tastings, cellar and vineyard tours, along with art exhibitions. One of the biggest draws (aside from the wine, of course) is the rare exhibition of vintage and exotic cars at L'Ormarins Wine Farm. It's worth noting that Franschhoek is as famous for its wine as for its internationally acclaimed, outstanding restaurants (there are more award-winning restaurants concentrated here than anywhere else in the country), so for connoisseurs of food and wine, this is the festival guaranteed to most please the palate.



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