



## NEWSLETTER | OCTOBER 2014



**DuToitskloof**  
RAWSONVILLE wines

It might sound like a bit of a cliché, but this year has really flown by quickly. It seems like just the other day we were still harvesting, and now October is already upon us. The most beautiful month, according to Leipoldt. And how beautiful indeed! As all our producers have experienced, the vineyards have started to bud early this year. The cold grey and brown colours of the vineyards have transformed into a lush green tapestry of young leaves, with flowering just about to start. There is water in abundance after a good winter, and the vineyards have had a proper rest. Although we don't know what the coming summer will hold, conditions certainly look favourable at this stage for a very promising season.

The demands of our everyday activities make it difficult for the Du Toitskloof family to get together on a regular basis, so in this letter I just want to touch on a few points of interest, as we have to remember that regular communication is just as important as the right spraying program.

### Awards

The achievements of Shawn Thomson and his cellar team leave no doubt that the farmers' grapes are in very capable hands. Du Toitskloof wines give special meaning to the phrase "punching above your weight". Excellent quality, and good value for money.

And our wines excelled at two prominent competitions held recently.

At the Michelangelo International Wine Awards Du Toitskloof Wines picked up not one but two gold medals: for the Du Toitskloof Pinotage 2012 as well as the Hanepoot Jerepigo 2013.

Now, what makes these awards really special is that the Michelangelo judging panel consists of international wine tasters from across the globe, with only one South African among them. To impress a panel of this calibre is no small feat, and it fills me with pride to see Du Toitskloof competing successfully against the best in the industry by winning gold twice.

Then there is also the well-known Veritas Awards, South Africa's biggest wine competition which annually attracts about 1 800 entries. Here the Du Toitskloof Dimension Nebbiolo 2010 and the Quest Heroes Journey 2011 both won a gold medal, once again excellent achievements in esteemed company.

There are so many opinions on wine competitions, and those who know wine will appreciate how difficult it is to taste and rate a line-up of wines, and to award a score.

These competitions however, have respected, large tasting panels, so there is really nowhere for a wine to hide its flaws. More importantly, the consumer has come to trust these awards medals as an indicator of wine quality. And as long as the consumer is happy, so are we.

### Marketing

Speaking of the consumer - in order to reach him or her nowadays, marketing requires about as much attention as viticulture and winemaking. With more than 6 000 wine brands vying for position, the local wine market is not a place for introverts and the faint-hearted. It is extremely competitive, and if you pause to blink, your competitors will eclipse you.

This year Du Toitskloof entered a new marketing chapter by utilising a rare opportunity on kykNET, the most popular channel in the Multichoice offering. We were given the chance to act as wine sponsor for the cooking show *Kokkedoor*, and it was a phenomenal success - both the program and in terms of exposure for our brand.

For 13 weeks the hundred thousands of Kokkedoor viewers became acquainted with the Du Toitskloof brand while the contestants cooked up a storm. Du Toitskloof was also involved in Multichoice's national high profile marketing in the form of advertisements on television and billboards, as well as in the media. The exposure for the brand was, and still remains, fantastic, and we look forward to being a part of the next season of *Kokkedoor*.

### Du Toitskloof-Muratie Cook-off

The Cook-off between Du Toitskloof and Muratie from Stellenbosch, which sees the two cellars battling it out for culinary supremacy, has now become an annual event. Unfortunately Du Toitskloof was pipped at the post on home soil by Muratie in this year's competition.

About 30 judges from the media, as well as a few *Kokkedoor* and *Masterchef* contestants were invited, with members of the board, to witness the two teams' skills in preparing authentic Karoo lamb. One dish had to be prepared cooking a whole piece of lamb in a pot over the coals, while the other dish was meat on the braai. In a very tight finish, Shawn and Elrine Thomson was defeated by Rijk and Kim Melck from Muratie. Still, the competition took place in good spirit, and as usual the proceedings turned into a festive get-together of note.

### To conclude

As I've previously mentioned, communication is of utmost importance. And from the cellar's side, we will regularly keep producers and interested parties up to date on all our activities and events. To name but a few imminent happenings, there is the building and opening of a new restaurant. Also the SA Wine Writer of the Year competition which Du Toitskloof sponsors in conjunction with Standard Bank. And next year we will reach out to the community with a mobile library that will provide much-needed reading and learning facilities for the local primary schools.

We are counting on your feedback though, so please don't hesitate to contact me at [marius@dutoitskloof.co.za](mailto:marius@dutoitskloof.co.za).

After all, our doors are always wide open.

*Marius Louw, chief executive officer.*



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