

Cape Wine Tourism Awards shine spotlight on industry's best

The 2024 Great Wine Capitals Best Of Wine Tourism Awards (BOWTA) winners have been announced, marking the 25th anniversary of the awards. The award ceremony took place at the Benguela Cove Lagoon Wine Estate in Hermanus on 11 October.

The awards recognise wineries in each of the Great Wine Capitals Global Network's member cities for their excellence in seven different categories, including art and culture, sustainable wine tourism, and wine tourism services, with the goal of celebrating innovation and excellence in wine tourism throughout the Western Cape.



Source: Supplied

The Wine Tourism Ambassador Awards, which were also announced, celebrate ongoing transformation, innovative sustainable practices, and authentic experiences in the South African wine tourism sector.

A total of 81 wine estates across the Western Cape entered the Great Wine Capitals Best Of Wine Tourism Awards 2024, all showcasing how they are elevating their wine tourism experiences for visitors, illustrating their region's rich culture, history, and wine heritage, and demonstrating their innovation and sustainability efforts.

Judging process

The judging process entailed an in-depth review process, with applicants being evaluated and shortlisted based on their submitted application forms. The final decision was then made by a total of thirteen judges - a panel of seven wine tourism expert judges, three Wine Tourism Ambassador Award judges and three roving judges.

To ensure a fair and thorough assessment, the expert judges conducted ghost site visits to all shortlisted wineries, allowing for an unbiased evaluation of the wine tourism experiences offered by each nominee.

At the end of September, the panel of expert judges and roving judges convened to present their findings and determine the winners in each category.

The process involved a careful consideration of various factors, including the quality of wine offerings, visitor experiences, sustainability initiatives, and overall excellence in wine tourism.

The winners in the Best Of Wine Tourism Awards for 2024 are:

Accommodation - Winner: Brookdale Estate

Wine Tourism Restaurants - Winner: Jordan Wines

Wine Tourism Services - Winner: Creation Wines

Sustainable Wine Tourism Practices: Winner: Vergelegen Wine Estate

Architecture & Landscape: Winner: Ernie Els Wines

Art & Culture: Winner: Creation Wines

Innovative Wine Tourism Experiences: Winner: Benguela Cove

Recognising excellence in the wine tourism industry is the Wine Tourism Ambassador Awards. The awards are designed to celebrate ongoing transformation, innovative sustainable practices, and authentic experiences in the South African wine tourism sector.

The following awards reflect South Africa's unique history and its evolving wine industry:

The Wine Tourism Diversity Award - Winner: Van Loveren

The Authentic South African Experience Award - Winner: Leopard's Leap

Conservation Pioneer Award - Winner: Delheim Wine Estate

"The Western Cape's wine tourism industry exemplifies the spirit of innovation, sustainability and commitment to excellence, making the province a must-visit destination for wine enthusiasts from around the world," commented Wrenelle Stander, Wesgro CEO.

Not only are the Cape Winelands some of the most breathtakingly beautiful in the world but they go beyond conventional practices to produce our internationally acclaimed wines, from picturesque landscapes to organic farming methods and a commitment to environmental stewardship.

I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the 2024 winners for their exceptional efforts in providing outstanding

experiences to our visitors and leading the charge in wine production integrity," added Stander.

Provincial Minister of Finance and Economic Opportunities, Mireille Wenger, said: "Western Cape wine tourism continues to be recognised globally as some of the best in the world. More than this, our wineries strive to embrace sustainable practices as well as celebrate their diverse heritage, adding exciting elements to their product offerings.

'I would like to congratulate each and every nominee and winner of this year's Best Of Wine Tourism and Wine Tourism Ambassador Awards, who raise the bar and push the boundaries of wine tourism excellence in this incredible province.'

"Year after year, the Best Of Wine Tourism and Wine Tourism Ambassador Awards continue to demonstrate the continuous growth and evolution of the wine tourism industry in the Western Cape and around the world.

"Wineries across the province have showcased their dedication to innovation and excellence in wine tourism by participating in these awards, and I wish to convey my sincere congratulations to all the winners and the industry at large for their continued dedication and support", said Monika Luel, Wesgro executive responsible for tourism and BOWTA ambassador.

Wesgro, the official Tourism, Trade and Investment Promotion Agency for Cape Town and the Western Cape, is the custodian of the Great Wine Capitals Global Network membership on behalf of the wine tourism regions of the province.

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