

# New wine guide for ordinary people

A new independently published wine guide, *The People's Wine Guide*, lists 600 wines and features “blind tasting” to ensure impartiality. It's aimed at those who buy wine from supermarkets and liquor chains, and is written in everyday language, it was announced on Friday, 29 May 2009.



David Msebi, Michael Olivier and Norma Ratcliffe tasting for *The People's Wine Guide*.

Tasting for the first edition of *The People's Wine Guide*, commenced this week in Cape Town's The Nose Wine Bar. The 600 wines were submitted by wineries from throughout the country for the judges' scrutiny. Their views will be made public when *The People's Wine Guide* hits the bookshelves in September.

According to Neil Pendock, who is writing the book in conjunction with wine author and former restaurateur Michael Olivier, the guide aims to assist consumers in their selections, as well as highlight the tremendous diversity and excellent quality of wines found in supermarkets at reasonable prices.

“Most of the media, and other guides, tend to focus on the merits of wines made in limited quantities that carry price tags out of the reach of most and are also not readily available to the public,” said Pendock.

## Not a “lofty tome”

“*The People's Wine Guide* is exactly that: a guide for members of the average wine-buying public instead of a lofty tome full of wine-speak focusing on the so-called wine expert. The wines they have become familiar with through their supermarket purchases, as well as a couple of exciting new discoveries made by lesser-known producers will be incorporated. The writing style, layout and general tone of the book will be just as accessible as the price and quality of the wines reviewed.”

Pendock said that tasting for the guide is blind, meaning that the judges are not privy to the relevant wine in their glass.

“This allows us to make a true independent judgement without prejudice or subjective views, something that has been proven

to sway tasters' opinions,” he added.

## **Wine sales increasing**

Olivier, who is also a former wine and food consultant to Pick n Pay, says that the amount of wine sold in supermarkets is increasing on a monthly basis.

“With the selection of wines available to supermarket shoppers increasing, it has become necessary for a guide aimed at helping them wade their way through the aisles,” he said. “And just as these shoppers have unique needs in their wine purchases, a guide is needed to assist them with their selections.”

Besides Pendock and Olivier, the tasters are Norma Ratcliffe, winemaker and proprietor of Warwick Wine Estate, Cathy Marston, former owner of The Nose Wine Bar, sommelier David Msebi and Portuguese winemaker and commentator Aníbal Coutinho.

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