

# FROM FIRST SIPS TO FIVE STARS

*2026 Platter's by Diners Club South African Wine Guide*

The 2026 edition of Platter's by Diners Club continues the legacy of helping newcomers to wine and veteran wine lovers alike find the perfect bottle.

South Africa may be an old nation when it comes to wine production, but it is a young one when it comes to wine consumption.

One reason for this is that it is a nation of beer drinkers – for every litre of wine consumed, close to 9 litres of beer are imbibed. And one particular beer brand alone has the same retail-sales value as the wine industry's 9,000 wine labels combined.

Another reason is that, compared to beer, wine is a complicated beverage. It is mostly 'still' but can be fizzy. It can be white, red, pink or orange, sweet or dry, fortified or unfortified, and nowadays, even de-alcoholised.

For 46 years, Platter's by Diners Club South African Wine Guide, known simply as 'Platters' by its thousands of fans, has been helping South African consumers navigate the local wine world, not only literally, because it features maps showing where the wine estates and brand homes are located,

but assisting them find the perfect bottle, regardless of the occasion.

With its eye-catching cover design (the colour changes with each edition, and guessing what it will be is a popular topic of conversation leading up to the guide's arrival on retail shelves), it has been an industry institution and a best-selling hardcover book for decades.

In addition to reviews and ratings of the current vintages on the shelves, it contains all the information winelovers, young and young-at-heart, need to get to grips with the industry, its geography and legislation, its grape varieties and wine styles, and its vintages, as well as organisations that support the growers and producers.

Most importantly for the industry and Platterati alike, there are the upfront pages listing the wines receiving its highest accolade, a five-star rating.

Annually, Platter's assesses a potential 8,000 wines. Those rated 93 points or more on the 100-point rating scale by the judges are entered into a second round of blind tasting (with





no label showing). Here, two tasters, assisted by a third-opinion taster if necessary, assess the wines to award them their final rating. Bottlings judged to be “Superlative, a South African classic” are given the highest ranking of five stars, equal to 95 points or more. Of the five-star-awarded wines, the top performer within each wine style receives the coveted accolade of Wine of the Year.

Then there are the three Winery of the Year awards: Top Performing

Winery of the Year (the winery that achieves the most five-star results); Newcomer Winery of the Year (the producer debuting in guide and achieving highest ratings at the five-star tasting), and Editor’s Award Winery of the Year (recognising a winegrowing team/teams who are ambassadors par excellence for South African wine). In the 46th edition, these awards go to Diemersdal Estate, Alheit Vineyards and The Saldanha Wine & Spirit Co, respectively.



#### **WHERE TO FIND PLATTER'S BY DINERS CLUB**

Distributed nationwide, there's the original, iconic hardcover version. Less visible perhaps, but equally valuable to the wine lover, are the digital versions of the guide - the website ([www.wineonaplatter.com](http://www.wineonaplatter.com)), the apps, and e-books.

With a range of value-added features such as advanced search, information about wine country accommodation, specialist tour operators, and dining options among



*Philip van Zyl, Editor, Platter's by Diners Club*

the vines, the web-based version is the flagship. For those who like the look of the hardcover but prefer a digital experience, there is the e-book. Downloadable to any device that runs the Kindle free e-reader app, it looks exactly like the book, and offers benefits inherent in the electronic format, like bookmarking, search, multiple navigation options, and hyperlinked websites and email addresses.

Serving as your digital sommelier, the apps provide the quickest and most direct access to the wine descriptions and ratings. Also, with a single tap, you can see which wineries are in your area and get directions to the venue of your choice via the built-in map.

*For more information, please visit [www.wineonaplatter.com](http://www.wineonaplatter.com).* 

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