

# The Mother of all SA Wine Shows

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18 October 2007, 17:46 GMT + 2 (Sunday Times)

Veritas is the oldest (17 years), largest (1904 entries this year) and according to the website [www.veritas.co.za](http://www.veritas.co.za) "the only wine competition in South Africa [run] for the industry by the industry." It is twice the size of Old Mutual's Trophy Wine Show and this year had a mega-bling contingent of international judges including three Masters of Wine and some serious Aussie wine identities on its panels.

It is also, somewhat surprisingly, the fastest growing SA wine show, with entries up 14% over last year, as opposed to a growth of 10% at the Swiss International Airlines Wine Awards, 9% at the Michelangelo International Wine Awards (the second largest SA competition) and a flat Trophy Show.

Hard-pressed producers obviously cherry-pick the shows they enter as there is little correlation of results between the various competitions. Comparing 2008 Platter five star selections against their Veritas ratings, the only positive correlation is the Double Gold for Carel Nel's Boplaas non-vintage Tawny Port. His cousin Boets' five star Vintage Reserve Port rates a Veritas Bronze (the lowest medal awarded), ditto for the Woolies Sauvignon Blanc 2007 from Cape Point: bronze at Veritas and five stars in Platter. But then Platter recommendations are made sighted, before Veritas results appear, which could explain the poor correlation.

While Veritas is often roundly criticized for its many sins of omission (I for one would beg to differ on the Veritas bronzes for Lars Maack's Hussey's Vlei Sauvignon Blanc 2006 and Spar's Quinette [sic] 2005 Bordeaux blend) but it's the sins of commission that are this show's USP (unique selling point in marketing spiel).

How else would you hear about the **Four Paws Pinotage 2006** which won gold? What a pity it wasn't a Sauvignon Blanc as then the winewriting fraternity would have been in ecstasy with cat's pee on a gooseberry bush finding a good home. There are two Merlots you've never heard of but should look out for. The first is the 2005 vintage from **Het Vlock Casteel** and the other is the **Spookfontein 2004**, a most appropriate wine with which to celebrate the upcoming Halloween.

But my favourite is the **Leopard Frog Tantra Limited Release 2004**. A bottle of this should go to pop-star and tantric-sex advocate Sting. After all, if you like to make love for 16 hours without an orgasm, a limited release is right up your street.