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Global Trends - Wine Industry Key Elements

Conference to focus on the business of wine and food tourism as government looks to grow the sector

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The first conference in South Africa to focus on the business of wine and food tourism will be held at Spier, Stellenbosch on 1 and 2 November. The conference will be opened by Min Derek Hanekom, who will launch the first ever national wine tourism strategy.

Several influential international experts will present at the conference. Californian Clay Gregory, CEO of Visit Napa Valley, will trace the success story of wine tourism in Napa Valley where in 2014, 3,3 million visitors spent $1,63 billion in the local economy. Dr. Robin Back of the University of Central Florida will present research conducted in South Africa and the US on different tasting room strategies. Felicity Carter, Editor in Chief of influential German publication, Meininger Wine Business International, will discuss the global business of wine tourism and Australian consultant Peter McAtamney will analyze best global practice as regards the customer experience at wineries.

There will also be a strong focus on adding practical value to the local industry with workshops on training, starting and growing a tourism enterprise, digital marketing, and how to attract more tourists to the winelands from the rest of South Africa and African countries to our north. Trends and opportunities in food tourism will be unpacked by J P Rossouw, publisher of Rossouw’s Restaurants and the Platter Wine Guide. Food visionary and former editor of Food24, Caro de Waal and trendy chefs Cynthia and Cornel will present.

The South African winelands has a competitive tourism offering that presents an opportunity for significant growth and job creation. Currently the South African wine industry contributes R6 billion annually to the economy and creates employment for 289 000 jobs in the value chain. The goal set by the wine industry is for wine tourism to reach a contribution of R15 billion by 2025. The support of local, provincial and national government will be crucial in reaching that goal. Tourism Australia have been promoting their food and wine offerings in their International campaign and seen growth of 25% in food and wine spend since its launch at the end of 2013.

Margi Biggs, convener of the conference, says "Bringing together Wine and Culinary tourism players to exchange ideas and share best global practices, all with a focus on the business aspect, will contribute to growing this vital industry. This will be an annual event that will attract a growing number of international delegates."

For more information on the conference - Click here to read more
Major Wine Producing Countries

French wine militants set fire to winery offices

A masked gang of militants claiming allegiance to the shadowy French winemaker group CRAV have attacked one of southern France's biggest wine companies, smashing windows and setting fire to offices in protest at 'cheap wine imports'.

The attackers claimed allegiance to Languedoc-Roussillon's Comité Régionale d'Action Viticole (CRAV), a shadowy group of winemakers that has existed for more than 50 years and intermittently used violence to pursue its goals.

The attackers said local winemakers were sitting on full vats of wine only weeks ahead of harvest, and blamed big companies in Languedoc for 'importing cheap wine'.

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