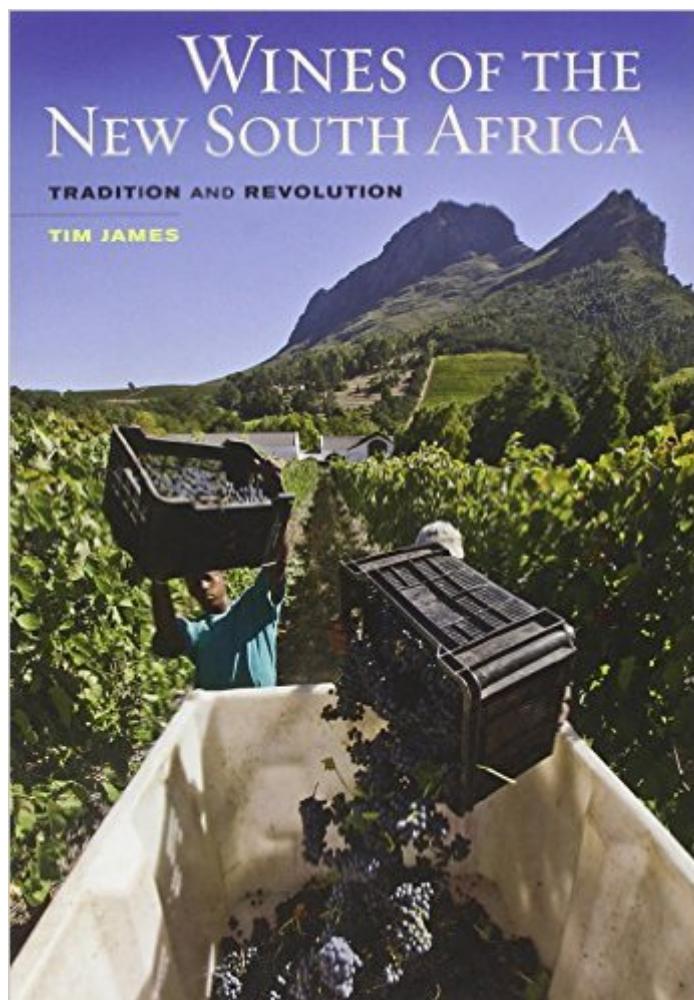


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Wines Of The New South Africa: Tradition And Revolution



Synopsis

Sought after by European aristocrats and a favorite of Napoleon Bonaparte, the sweet wines of Constantia in the Cape Colony were considered to be among the world's best during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During the first democratic elections in 1994, South Africa began to re-emerge onto the international wine scene. Tim James, an expert on South African wines, takes the reader on an information-packed tour of the region, showing us how and why the unique combination of terroir and climate, together with dramatic improvements in winemaking techniques, result in wines that are once again winning accolades. James describes important grape varieties and wine styles; from delicate sparkling, to rich fortified, and everything in between; including the varietal blends that produce some of the finest Cape wines. Anchoring his narrative in a rich historical context, James discusses all the major wine regions, from Cederberg to Walker Bay, complete with profiles of more than 150 of the country's finest producers.

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Customer Reviews

South African wines are not necessarily at the forefront of many wine buffs' minds when pressed, yet they may be missing out on something with a tremendous heritage that became overshadowed during the country's past apartheid times. The term "New South African Wine" refers to the time after 1994 when democratic elections were epoch-changing in the country and freed from international restrictions the country's wine producers needed to help re-educate the wine world about a wine that had often been forgotten. Despite its past glories and heritage there was a bit of an uphill battle

that still exists today. Even now, nearly 20 years on, South African wines can be a bit of a "best kept secret" for many, and the author of this book manages to convey a tremendous amount of information in an engaging, knowledgeable manner. Despite the book's clearly pro-academic leanings and lashings of notes and an extensive bibliography, this remains an accessible book for the enthusiastic "amateur" wine drinker as well as the researcher or industry insider. Despite looking forward, instead of backwards, the author still provides a great historical record too, going right back to the start of the country's wine industry from 1652. Such historical information helps establish the industry's heritage, pedigree and sets the scene for its more recent developments. This book is big on details. After a look at the various grape varieties and styles it is time to start focussing, with chapters dealing with the different wine-making regions individually. It feels as if you are getting a great mixture of wine guide, geographical primer and even a bit of a history lesson all rolled into one, and that is no bad thing either. A little bit of something for everyone if you will.

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