Wines of South Africa Reports Sales Up 14% by Volume, 25% in Value in the U.S.

Importers Place New Focus on Category and Quality, Engage On and Off Premise Trade

New York, NY (PRWEB) August 23, 2016 -- According to Nielsen data, South African wine sales in the United States are up 14% by volume for the 52-week period ending July 16, 2016. The data also shows a 25% growth in value for total sales over that same period, indicating an increasing consumer willingness to spend more on wine from the region.

Wines of South Africa (WOSA) USA, a not-for-profit industry organization, attributes much of the growth to an increased importer focus on the region as a whole, coupled with greater boutique-importer demand for suppliers of small production, higher quality South African wines. WOSA has been working to amplify the surging popularity of the region by engaging trade audiences with a range of programs and events, including its third annual Sommelier Cup, a competition between more than 50 sommeliers designed to test skills and knowledge of South African wines. On August 13, 2016 at wine industry conference TEXSOM, Cheron Cowan, General Manager and Beverage Director at Harold’s Meat + Three, was named champion of the US competition, and awarded the opportunity to participate in the global competition in Cape Town in September.

“As we continue to educate the public, we’re thrilled to see consumers viewing South Africa, not only as a great region for value, but for quality as well,” said Jim Clarke, Wines of South Africa US Marketing Manager. “To see value of sales jump 25% in just 12 months is a true testament to both the skill and dedication of our wine makers, and the diligence of top-notch importers to bring those wines to market.”

Progressive South African wine importers have been at the forefront of those seeking out niche producers and opening consumers up to the complexity of South Africa’s subcategories beyond its overarching ‘New World’ label.

“I’m noticing that retailers and consumers alike are not shying away from higher end wines from South Africa,” said Sam Timberg, Managing Director of Meridian Prime Inc., a boutique importer. “The fact of the matter is that South African wines present great values at every price point, so you can be confident that if you are buying South African wine from a solid importer, you will be getting a wine that punches above its price point, no matter what you spend.”

South African Chenin Blanc in particular has shown to be an increasingly attractive varietal among American consumers, due to its ability to appeal to a wide range of wine drinkers. The grape offers a unique combination of mouthfeel, aromatic generosity, and freshness, satisfying Chardonnay drinkers’ demands for body, while simultaneously offering the lighter qualities found more appealing by fans of Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Grigio. South Africa also boasts a range of old-vine Chenin Blancs, with approximately 2,500 acres of old vine Chenin, 35+ years of age, planted throughout the Western Cape.

Methode Cap Classique (MCC), South Africa’s officially designated sparkling wine, is yet another category that has seen tremendous growth in the U.S. market, up 51% in exports from South Africa compared to last year, according to South Africa Wine Industry Information & Systems. The Nielsen data shows that the increase in exports is paralleled by an in increase in the MCC sales of certain bottlings by over 500% from last year.
About Wines of South Africa

Wines of South Africa (WOSA) is the organization representing all South African producers of wine who export their products. WOSA, which was established in its current form in 1999, has over 500 exporters on its database, comprising all the major South African wine exporters. It is constituted as a not-for-profit company and is totally independent of any producer, wholesaling company or government department but is recognized by the South African Export Council. WOSA’s mandate is to promote the export of all South African wines in key international markets including the United States.
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