



BIG BRANDS POUR INTO SOWETO WINE FESTIVAL

Soweto, Johannesburg, 23 July 2007 – The Standard Bank Soweto Wine Festival, an event that is becoming a major attraction in South Africa, takes place this year on 7 and 8 September 2007. Wine connoisseurs, consumers, producers and wine lovers from all over the world are expected to attend the festival that will showcase over 800 different wines from 125 wine exhibitors.

The Standard Bank Soweto Wine Festival is the third festival of its kind, and aims to promote the wine industry, while creating and enhancing investment opportunities in the field of tourism and hospitality in Soweto.

Says Marilyn Cooper, Cape Wine Master, and one of the founding members and Managing Director of the Cape Wine Academy who are organisers of the festival: "This year the festival will provide a strong platform for business opportunities across multiple markets. A strategic change is the added focus on wine, as opposed to including brandy, as was in years' past. We wanted to attract a very specific calibre of sponsor partners, those who have a genuine and vested interest in the wine industry. The backing of well-established brands such as **Standard Bank (headline sponsor), Pick 'n Pay Hypermarkets, Joburg Tourism, Bertrams, DStv/BBC Food with Kaya FM and Sunday Times** has added a significant dimension to the festival".

Says Bertie Smith, Director of Agricultural Banking at Standard Bank: "Standard Bank's involvement in the Soweto Wine Festival is a natural extension of our existing support of the agricultural industry, which dates back to 1863. We believe that the wine industry plays a critical role in the transformation of South Africa. Our expertise in finance, experience in agriculture and understanding of the wine industry positions us well to support the contribution that this industry makes to the continued growth of our economy."

"This opportunity also allows us to demonstrate our support of the development of Soweto, and to assist in unlocking the economic potential of the township," says Smith.

The quality of the wines that will be showcased is a definite attraction, since South Africa produces quality wines that reflect discerning and singularly unique tastes, many of which have won awards and accolades at exhibitions and wine fairs worldwide. However the host township with its rich history and abundant culture is a sure attraction and patrons of the festival are guaranteed of a truly unique African experience.

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Says Kader Patel, GM of Foods/Marketing - Pick n Pay Hypermarkets, "Pick 'n Pay Hypermarkets are launching their first Hypermarket in Soweto at the end of September, and have positioned themselves as the premier wine stockists for the trendy and vibrant Soweto market, hence we are proud to be part of the Soweto Wine Festival."

Jo'burg Tourism is excited to promote tourism into Soweto during September, National Tourism month. They are equally excited by the interest shown by international tourists, and the potential tourism in Soweto holds for stimulation of the economy.

Mnikelo Mangciphu, a co-founding member of Soweto Wine Festival, and co-owner of Morara Wine and Spirit Emporium says this year operational strength is the dominant factor. "Strategic assessment, improved planning, valuable partner alliances and local solutions are at the forefront of making this a bigger, better and more focussed event.

For more information, visit www.sowetowinefestival.co.za

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