



**For Immediate Release  
For Lifestyle and Business Editors/Journalists**

## **IT'S OFFICIAL. SOWETO LOVES WINE!**

**SOWETO, GAUTENG, 7 SEPTEMBER 2009** - It is official. Soweto loves South African wine. On the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September, 5,520 people flocked to the 2009 Standard Bank Soweto Wine Festival to taste over 800 wines. This is an increase of nearly 1000 people in comparison to 2008. If wine once had a bad reputation in the townships, this is now well and truly buried as a new generation of wine appreciators comes to the fore in their thousands. They are the South African black middle class market and they live in Soweto, the northern, eastern and southern suburbs of Johannesburg. They are the future wine consumers of South Africa.

**Mnikelo Mangciphu**, joint founding member of the Soweto Wine Festival and owner of Morara Wine Emporium in Soweto says "Every year, it gets better and better. The organisers raised the bar for wineries and sponsors allowing for greater interactivity between the crowds. The atmosphere was vibrant as new and connoisseur wine drinkers delved in to savour their favourite tippie from the hundreds of wines available. If there is one complaint, it was that we ran out of space. A bigger venue for 2010 must be a serious consideration."

The popularity of the Soweto Wine Festival is growing at such a pace that moving to a new venue and/or increasing the number of days over which the festival is run, is a major consideration for 2010. On Friday evening, organisers had to close the gates an hour earlier than anticipated and on the Saturday, they had to close the gate after only being open for 3 hours.

"We proudly noticed an emerging trend at the festival", continues Mnikelo. "The visitors were slightly older this year and at the end of the evenings, there were some happy people but barely anyone was drunk. This shows us that the educational element is working. We don't want to encourage people to come for free drink. We want to encourage people who are interested in wine and learning about wine. Our overall strategy is educating about wine and we are succeeding. It really was the most fantastic event."

**Marilyn Cooper**, Cape Wine Master, joint founding member of the Soweto Wine Festival and MD of the Cape Wine Academy, who are the organisers of the festival, says "A special thank you to everyone involved, especially our primary sponsors, Standard Bank and media sponsors, City Press, DSTV and Kaya FM plus our wineries without whom this festival could not happen. This was a phenomenal year and attendance exceeded our expectations. Unfortunately, we had to turn away guests on both Friday and Saturday evenings so we will either be extending the festival to three days or look for a much larger venue. Our many wine estates handled the tasting tasks magnificently with at times the queues being 3 to 4 deep. A special thank you to Kaya FM's T-

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Bose and Phat Joe. They were a major hit and handled the announcements and prize giveaways throughout the evenings with immense professionalism.”

This year there was an overwhelming response by the media locally and internationally. Nearly every major South African newspaper and TV channel was represented at the festival with over 160 media over both evenings. International representation came from Japan, Belgium, Spain, France, EFE and Reuters to name a few.

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**EDITORS NOTES**

**More info and images: [www.sowetowinefestival.co.za](http://www.sowetowinefestival.co.za) (PRESS ROOM)**

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**Soweto Wine Festival**

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