



NEW YORK SOMMELIER WINS U.S. ROUND OF WINES OF SOUTH AFRICA SOMMELIER CUP

More than 70 of the U.S.'s top sommeliers tossed their hats in the ring for the first round of the Wines of South Africa Sommelier Cup. Unlike previous years, this competition had a number of stages to ensure these sommeliers learned as much as possible about South Africa's dynamic industry.

On April 18th, entrants completed a timed, multiple choice, on-line exam. Wines of South Africa then sent the top ten candidates a selection of wine to taste and write about, and each were tasked with discussing a different South African region or grape variety. From this we selected three semi-finalists who travelled to TEXSOM to compete in-person in a blind tasting of six South African wines.

The 3 semi-finalists were:

- Cheron Cowan, Harold's Meat + Three, NYC
- Michael Duffy, Burger & Barrel, NYC
- Jeremy Eubanks, Metropolitan Grill and John Howie Steakhouse, Seattle/Belevue

Master Sommeliers Barbara Werley of Pappas Bros. and Laura Rhys, Brand Ambassador, judged the blind tasting, overseen by Master Sommelier and TEXSOM founder James Tidwell, who will also be a judge at the international finals in Cape Town in September. Flight delays getting to Dallas didn't rattle Cheron, and she walked away as the victor.

Cheron will travel to South Africa next month to represent the U.S. in the global final which takes place on Friday 23rd September. She will compete against the winners from seven of South Africa's other key markets. Prior to the final, contestants will enjoy a week of winery visits, tastings and meals with producers. It has been said in previous years that the trip provides a fantastic opportunity to not only learn more about South African wines, but too make new global friends as well.

Good luck to all of the finalists!

Jim Clarke
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