

Wineland treats for fans

2010 Stellenbosch Wine Festival offers off-the-pitch attractions by the dozen including wine tastings and delicious meals

MYRNA
ROBINS

tabletop



OFF-THE-PITCH attractions by the dozen – that's the promise from the organisers of the 2010 Stellenbosch Wine Festival that's been brought forward by a month to accommodate football fans looking for a great winelands experience between the beautiful games.

From July 1 to 5 the Cape's leading wine route will operate a network of shuttles between wine farms taking part, so that visitors can leave their vehicles in the park-and-ride areas. Transport from the city has also been organised.

Some estates are erecting big screens for soccer matches, while others are offering events that include rare vertical and varietal wine tastings, exclusive dinners with winemakers, live music and art exhibitions – including the new gallery at Stellenbosch Hills in a refurbished wine tank, where little-known artists are mounting accessible, affordable examples of their work.

● Combine Boland style with French flair at L'Avenir where sport is screened in the Café de Paris and coffee, croissants, baguettes and crepes are on the menu. Boules sets await visitors wishing to roll the silver ball, and the award-winning range of L'Avenir wines are paired with olives during tastings at the cost of one festival voucher.

For R35 travellers can adorn a bottle of L'Avenir wine with their own message and label, or for R30 take part in a blind tasting challenge and stand to win wine and courses from the Cape Wine Academy.

Learn the art of sabrage or book for an evening of Matthew Kruger's Unplugged – the group's original rock music in French and Afrikaans is taking the country by storm.

● Hartenberg estate off the Bottejary road has lined up a tempting menu for festival and World Cup visitors for July. Parties of up to six can book for an intimate tour of the old and new cellars, where tastings are accompanied by gourmet bites worthy of their shiraz, merlot and red blends, at R60 a head.

Conventional tastings are paired with varieties of organic olives.

Hearty indigenous classics –



THE FRENCH CONNECTION: L'Avenir's verdant vines outside Stellenbosch.

lamb shanks, skilpadjies and more – are on the menu of a braai on July 2 when winemaker Carl Schultz and viticulturist Wilhelm Joubert don chefs' aprons while pouring their finest wines. Book for this R250 treat well ahead.

From now until spring travellers can savour a four-course country lunch with wine at Hartenberg for R140 – venison is likely to be on the menu next month.

● Make time during the festivities to visit the Helderberg where the spectacular new Waterkloof winery on high makes an irresistible venue.

Fires will glow in their new tasting lounge with its panoramic views over a wintry False Bay, where wine tastings are complemented by cheese platters, curried mussels and fries or lamb pies. The

extraordinary "glass box" restaurant is presenting three-course gourmet meals at R190.

The world class wines being produced at this cellar include three tiers: Waterkloof is the prestigious leader; while Circumstance includes exciting whites and a shiraz, and Peacock Ridge presents affordable quality that must be sampled.

Visitors can take advantage of fine weather by booking a wine-tasting on horseback through the estate's manicured vineyards and magnificent fynbos, finishing with a ploughman's platter.

Booking for these outings is essential.

Entrance to festival activities costs R150 for a day pass and R500 for a five-day pass. For more information log on to www.wineroute.co.za or call 021 886 4310.

GOLF

Switching focus from Stellenbosch to the Perdeberg, from soccer to golf, here's news of a pleasing project: through a partnership between golfer David Frost and Perdeberg winery an affordable range of the champion's wines is helping swell the funds of an outreach programme supporting future champions. PGA player David Frost relaunched his Signature labels recently, announcing that R1 from every bottle sold would be donated to the Raymond Ackerman Golf Academy which supports promising high school golfers with studies, mentorship and golf tuition up to matric level. The wines, which cost between R27 and R36, are stocked by Pick n Pay outlets and the David Frost cellar in the Voor-Paardeberg.

WIN

TGW has some great prizes worth R6 000 awaiting wine-lovers heading for the Stellenbosch Wine Festival.

One reader will win a two-night weekend stay at the luxurious L'Avenir Vineyards four-star country lodge for two worth R4 000. A second will win a festival wine-tasting and lunch for two at Hartenberg estate, and a third will savour wine-tasting and cheese platters for four around the fire at Waterkloof winery's tasting lounge.

To enter send an e-mail to leanne@gc-com.co.za by close of business on Wednesday, June 23 with the answer to this question: Over which dates will the 2010 Stellenbosch Wine Festival take place?

Include your name, daytime phone number and TGW/Stellenbosch giveaway in the subject line.