



THE INVESTEC TROPHY SPIRITS SHOW

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Kindred Spirits

ITSS 2026 – 1

The South African Spirits Industry – and its consumer base – is unique and extraordinary by any measure in the world of alcoholic beverages. It is therefore apt and appropriate that it enjoys access to a competition which rates and ranks not only the products it produces locally, but also the rival products which come into the country in commercial quantities and against which all compete for the patronage of South Africa consumers.

The Investec Trophy Spirits Show is uniquely positioned to serve this flourishing and remarkably ancient industry, whose origins date back over 350 years. Now in its 8th successive year, the Trophy Spirits Show is defined by the judging methodology first developed at the Investec Trophy Wine Show, and now widely emulated.

It is one of the only competitions of its kind where all products in the same category – irrespective of their area of origin or region of production – are judged against each other in the same glass and by the same panel of judges: all pot-distilled grape products, whether from Cognac or the Cape, face each other across the tasting benches; gins from major producers around the world go head-to-head with craft distillates made by local artisans; while in the whisky classes the best of malts and blends from Scotland take on the finest pot-distillates from across the Irish Sea. The fact that so many South African brands emerged victorious at the end of the day's judging speaks of the quality of craftsmanship built up over many generations.

There were 98 entries received this year from 21 producers and distributors with 46 brands, spread through eight categories. This year pot-still brandies from the Cape and France vied with whiskies (and edged them into second place) with 27 submissions compared with 26. The whisk(e)y classes saw the greatest breadth with a range of malt, pot-still and blended whiskies/whiskeys on the tasting benches. It is a tribute to the respect in which the show is held that most of the major brands were represented.

There was fair spread of entries across all three gin categories – London Dry, Distilled and Flavoured Gin, and included local craft submissions as well as entries from international producers. Given the worldwide surge in interest in tequila/agave and rum, there was good representation in these classes, while vodkas and cream liqueurs completed the judging line-up.

Peta Dixon, Head of Sponsorships at Investec said: “We’re proud to support platforms that recognise excellence and create opportunities for local industries and the talent behind them to be seen alongside the best in the world. The Investec Trophy Spirits Show reflects that commitment, giving South African producers a respected stage and a meaningful benchmark against international entries, while helping to raise the profile of the country’s spirits sector.”

South Africa’s spirits industry has a history of more than 350 years, beginning alongside the Cape’s early wine production and later expanding as local producers developed skills in distillation, brandy-making and other spirit categories. By the late 20th century, South Africa had also become a significant market for international spirits, including Scotch whisky, while rum, gin, whisky, vodka and liqueurs became part of the country’s broader wine and spirits landscape, shaped by local ingredients, international influences and generations of technical craft.

The teams on the tasting benches comprised three senior judges, together with an associate whose input is noted but not necessarily taken into account in the final tally. The panellists were as follows: Andy Watts, Jason McEvoy, Dave Gunns, Neil Paterson, Dr Mare-Loe Prinsloo, Dr Carla Weightman, Sean Gunns, Kresan Naidu and Dr Winnie Bowman CWM.

The associate judges were Matthew Cox, René Groenewald CWM and Sulette Oelofse. Show convenor Michael Fridjhon was Chairman of the Judges.

All results, including silver (90 to 94/100) and bronze medallists (85 – 89/100) are also listed on the website: www.trophyspiritsshow.co.za

Trophy Winners

Trophy for Best Potstill Brandy
Investec Trophy for Best Brandy of Show
KWV XO Cellar Reserve Potstill Brandy

Investec Trophy for Best Malt Whisky
Investec Trophy for Best Whisky of Show
Sinfonia Minor Blended Malt Scotch Whisky

Investec Trophy for Best London Dry Gin
Riedel Trophy for Best Gin of Show
Tanqueray London Dry Gin

Trophy for Best Cognac
Frapin XO Chateau Fontpinot Cognac

Trophy for Best Vodka
Smirnoff No. 21 Vodka

Investec Trophy for Best Single Potstill Whisk(e)y
Vinolok Trophy for Best Premium Spirit
Redbreast 21 Year Old Single Potstill Irish Whiskey

Investec Trophy for Best Blended Whisk(e)y
O'Driscolls Irish Whiskey Matured in Bourbon Cask

Trophy for Best Tequila
Herradura Selección Suprema Tequila

Trophy for Best Aperitif
Dullstroom Lemonlicious Limonchilli

Trophy for Best Liqueur
Wild Africa Chocolate Cream

Gold Medal Winners

Aberlour A'Bunadh Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky
Boschendal Potstill Brandy XO – 10 Year Old
Chivas Regal 18 – Aged 18 Years
Coppersmith 1904 London Dry Gin
el Jimador Reposado Tequila
KWV TEN Year Old Brandy
KWV VS Brandy
KWV VSOP Brandy
Woodford Reserve Distiller's Select Kentucky Straight Rye Whiskey

Silver Medal Winners

Aberlour Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky 12 year Old Double Cask Matured
Aberlour Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky 16 year Old Double Cask Matured
Anarchy Premium Dark Rum
Avante XO Cape Brandy
Avante XV Founders' Fifteen Cape Brandy
Bella Baci Arancello Liqueur
Bella Baci Limoncello
Boschendal Potstill XXO Brandy 21 Year Old
Casamigos Blanco Tequila
Don Julio 1942 Tequila Anejo
Frapin Grande Champagne Cognac 1270
Gordon's Special London Dry Gin
IMAGIN Original London Dry Gin Classic Juniper
Jameson Triple Distilled Blended Irish Whiskey 18 year Old

Johnnie Walker Black Label 12 Year Old Blended Scotch Whisky
Johnnie Walker Blue Label Blended Scotch Whisky
Kavalan Lán Single Malt Whisky
KWV THREE
KWV FIVE
Maclean's Nose Blended Scotch Whisky
Masau Spirits Golden Liqueur
Masau Wooded Cane Spirit Aperitif
Metanoia Husk Spirit
Metanoia Klein Karoo Signature Single Malt Whisky
Metanoia Klein Karoo Signature Whisky
Redbreast 15 Year Old Single Potstill Irish Whiskey
Redbreast 18 Year Old Single Potstill Irish Whiskey
Rocco Torro Reposado 100% De Agave Spirit
Roe & Co. Blended Irish Whiskey
Speyburn Bourbon Cask Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky
Speyburn Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky aged 10 Years
Sydney Back Finest Matured Potstill 10 Year Old Brandy
Sydney Back Limited Reserve Potstill 25 Year Old Brandy
Tanqueray No. Ten
The Glenlivet 15 Year Old
The Glenlivet 18 Year Old
The Glenlivet 21 Year Old
The Singleton of Dufftown Luscious Nectar 12 Years Old
Wild Africa Café Latte Cream
Woodford Reserve Distiller's Select Kentucky Straight Malt Whiskey

ends

Issued by OutSorceress Marketing on behalf of The Investec Trophy Spirits Show.

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