

# Rare South African brandy sells for R60 000 at Nederburg Charity Auction

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Dawid Justus buyer of the Van Ryn's 40 year old at the Nederburg Charity Auction. Image supplied.

Van Ry



JOHANNESBURG - A once-off, 40-year-old potstill brandy from Van Ryn's Distillery in Stellenbosch which sold for R60 000 at the Nederburg Charity Auction will be winging its way to the United Kingdom as a gift.

The brandy was purchased by regular auction-goer Dawid Justus for a fellow South African colleague who marks 25 years at a London investment firm this year.

“Dr Jonathan Knowles gave me the biggest opportunity of my life when he hired me 13 years ago. I wanted to give him something of true excellence from our beloved continent,” Justus said. “The fact that the brandy was re-vatted in 1992, the same year Jonathan joined the firm, and my excitement about Sp(i)eel, the charity which received the proceeds, added to the attraction.”

The noble spirit last saw the light of day in 1977, and has spent the last four decades maturing in French oak casks under the careful custodianship of four previous master distillers at Van Ryn's in Stellenbosch.



*Van Ryn's Nederburg Auction 40 year old brandy. Image supplied.*

“As master distillers we carry out our daily work well aware that often we might not be around to savour the fruits of our labours,” said Van Ryn’s current master distiller, Marlene Bester.

“There will never be another brandy quite like this,” explained Bester. “It is the result of experimental brandy-making which represents early forays into modern barrel finishing techniques, where barrels previously used for sweet wine maturation were chosen to add complexity during the maturation process. The brandy was tasted at regular intervals to ensure optimal flavour and aroma development. I’m honoured to have had the privilege of bottling and releasing this unique brandy.”

The rare potstill, is a non-chill filtered, cask strength brandy with an alcohol percentage of 41% - slightly higher than the traditional 38% of South African potstills.

“Usually, all brandies are chill filtered to increase the aesthetic appeal of the brandy which can become cloudy when stored at very low temperatures,” Bester said. “Given this brandy’s unique qualities, we chose to forgo chill filtering to ensure that it retained its most natural form, and the colours, aromas and flavours that have developed over the last 40 years were not filtered out.”

The brandy has a nose of vibrant notes of potpourri underpinned by subtle hints of sweet, red berries, followed by creamy chocolate and butterscotch notes. “If you were fortunate enough to take a sip, you would be greeted by sweet spice, nutmeg and tobacco with a dry

lingering finish of coconut and chocolate. It is an absolutely sublime expression of top quality South African brandy where every precious drop will be savoured.”

Befitting such a rare tippie is the unique 1.2l hand-blown decanter, created by South African glass blower, David Reade, whose creations are coveted by collectors both locally and abroad.

The Charity Auction is a proud tradition of the annual Nederburg Auction, raising much needed funds for beneficiaries since 1993.

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