

In your hood: **In and around Cape Town**

Wade Bales Wine & Malt Whisky Affair | wadebales.co.za  
 Wacky Wine Weekend | wackywineweekend.com  
 Christmas in Winter | tulbaghtourism.co.za

# Cheers to winter

There's no shortage of wine and whisky events to keep you entertained this winter

WORDS: RICHARD HOLMES • IMAGES: SUPPLIED

The winter months have arrived, which in the Western Cape means its time for fantastic wine and spirits festivals. We bring you our top picks for the coming weeks.

**Wade Bales Wine & Malt Whisky Affair, 17 and 18 May**

With cold fronts rolling across the Cape, a wee dram of *uisge beatha* is called for, and the annual Wine & Malt Whisky Affair offers a taste of dozens of single malts and blends from across the world. Alongside the superb whisky offering, you can taste from a range of the Cape's top wine producers, with a generous spread of gourmet cheeses, deli snacks and artisanal breads on offer. Listen out for the "half-time" bell, when rare and limited-edition whiskies and wines will be available to taste for a 15-minute window. The event takes place at the stylish African Pride 15 on Orange Hotel, so it's worth hauling out your glad rags. Tickets are available online through Quicket ([goo.gl/DKsn18](http://goo.gl/DKsn18))

**Wacky Wine Weekend, 31 May to 3 June**

This popular annual event returns for the 15th consecutive year, with a four-day programme of activities that takes in the food, wine and culture of the Robertson Valley. More than 20 wine estates across the region have put together an exciting range of events, from barrel tastings in the cellar to boat cruises and distillery tours. There's even a mechanical rodeo bull bucking away at Ashton Winery, if you've imbibed enough courage! Punters certainly won't go hungry either, with everything from bunny chow stalls to riverside braais on the menu.

**Christmas in winter, 23 and 24 June**

Tulbagh celebrates the snow-capped mountains with its annual Christmas festival. Alongside wine tasting at the valley's various cellars, it's a family-

friendly affair as Father Christmas pays a visit to historic Church Street, craft markets sell festive goodies and there's everything from pony rides to tractor trips to keep the young ones entertained.

**win**

To celebrate the start of the winter festivals, Wade Bales is offering two lucky *Neighbourhood* readers the chance to win a double ticket each for the glamorous Wade Bales Wine & Malt Whisky Affair. To enter the draw, send your details to [charis@neighbourhood.co.za](mailto:charis@neighbourhood.co.za), with Wade Bales in the subject line, before 12 noon on Monday, 14 May. Tickets are valid for either evening.

In your hood: **Franschhoek**

Foliage | 021 876 2328 | foliage.co.za



# Wild at heart

Foliage in Franschhoek takes sustainable dining to a delicious new level

WORDS & IMAGE: KIT HEATHCOCK

One of Franschhoek's top food destinations, Foliage, bucks the fine dining establishment norm, playing by its own rules. Chef and owner Chris Erasmus jokingly likens his kitchen to a pirate ship, with infectious laughter, energy and enjoyment spilling from the open kitchen so that you're smiling even before you taste the food. The incredible beef crackling bread with spicy baba ganoush that started our bread service widened that smile even further.

out with baskets. This is serious foraging; everyone learns to identify wild mushrooms and edible plants, perhaps returning laden with porcini mushrooms if the rains have obliged. Then it's back to the kitchen, preserving, pickling and processing. In hunting season, Chris visits local farms overrun by Egyptian geese or peacocks and shoots with a bow and arrow for the pot, turning the birds into a beautiful ramen broth, picking off the meat for dim sum and using everything.

For Chris, it's all about living off the land in a sustainable way. "Everything needs to fit in with the whole circle," he says. "We don't just barbeque our beef, we braise it first in whey. The whey comes from making our cheeses. A 15-year-old local boy keeps three cows and supplies us with raw milk. We use fig leaves (no animal rennet) to make our soft cheese, and milk thistle roots for our harder cheeses like feta and cheddar." He aims for zero wastage, harvests wild plants and mushrooms, and grows vegetables and edible indigenous plants in his and his neighbours' gardens. Locals as well as tourists eat here, sometimes bartering the riches of their garden or the bounty of a successful hunt.

Grassroots South African staples sometimes perplex diners from afar: the samp and beans supports luscious chicken ravioli, with earthy flavours lifted by the acidity of indigenous carissa (aka num-num); a rich skilpadjie accompanies the pork belly, deep and substantial, with mieliepap and pineapple beer waffle. The adventurous spirit comes through in the flavours, which are alive and often surprising: think braaied cheesecake rolled in amaranth with fresh crunch of herbs and ferns, piquant horseradish, herb stems and sorrel with Franschhoek trout.

Expect the unexpected at Foliage and enjoy the foodie trip. With the frequently changing menu, it's one to return to often.

Off season, the restaurant is closed for lunch and the whole team goes