

Mason to Move Mountains for Mulderbosch

November 23, 2011 (Stellenbosch, South Africa) - Mulderbosch, acclaimed Stellenbosch wine producer, has appointed Adam Mason as winemaker and Chrianto Oosthuizen as general manager, effective from 1 December 2011. California-based investment group Terroir Capital acquired Mulderbosch in 2011.

Mason has been winemaker at Klein Constantia for the past eight years, prior to which he spent six years abroad. He will continue to offer his support to winemakers Matthew Day and Stiaan Cloete at Klein Constantia until early February 2012 and will then devote his full attention to Mulderbosch, assisted by Annalie van Dyk in the winery.

Oosthuizen has extensive experience in finance, marketing, personnel and production management and joins Mulderbosch after almost two decades at Neil Ellis Wines.

Charles Banks, founding and managing partner of Terroir Capital, says that the appointment of these 'two South African industry leaders' is proof of his company's commitment to 'taking Mulderbosch to the next level'. Terroir Capital's head winemaker Andy Erickson (of Californian cult wine Screaming Eagle fame) will continue to consultant.

Banks says Mason and Oosthuizen will not only bring stability to the team but conclude 'six months of putting all the basics in place', including significant investment to revamp Mulderbosch's winery, improve viticultural practices at its key vineyard partners, enhance the business's environmental sustainability, address social issues and provide staff training.

Mason previously worked with both Banks and Erickson, having spent the 2008 Californian harvest at Screaming Eagle. "During my time there I was very impressed by their ethos and approach to making wine and the positive chemistry that developed between us as a team," recalls Mason, 'and I relish the opportunity to resume our relationship at Mulderbosch.'

Banks in turn says that Mason was his first choice for Mulderbosch, based on their "mutual appreciation of wine, teamwork and continuity that was borne out in the cellar."

Mason said the move was one he viewed with anticipation and he looked forward to the new challenges and creative opportunities ahead. Already one of the most sought-after premium brands on the US market, having been imported by Cape Classics for almost two decades, Mulderbosch has seen its production triple over the past four years whilst undergoing considerable changes.

"I welcome the prospect of exciting times at Mulderbosch over the next few years. The key objective is quality at a fair price – and communicating that message to the consumer. I look forward to being a part of the team tasked with reinvigorating this great South African brand."

About Adam Mason: Before his appointment at Klein Constantia in 2003, Adam Mason spent two years as general manager/winemaker for International Wine Services South Africa (the wine production division of Scottish & Newcastle). Prior to that, he was based in France as a contract winemaker for Laithwaite's, the world's largest wine mail order company with cellars in Bordeaux, Languedoc-Roussillon, the Rhone valley, Provence and the Var. During this four-year period, he also worked alternate harvests in South Africa (at Boschendal and Flagstone). Originally from Johannesburg, where he attended Sandown High School, Mason received his BSc in Oenology and Viticulture from the University of Stellenbosch in 1997.

About Chrianto Oosthuizen: Born and raised in North-West Province, Chrianto Oosthuizen moved to the Cape to study Cost and Management Accounting at the University of Stellenbosch. After graduating in 1993, he joined Neil Ellis Wines as an accountant. He became financial manager in 1997, a position he held for three years until his promotion to financial director. Named managing director in 2008, his role covered everything from finance and admin, marketing and sales, to production and personnel. He was also responsible for key account customers and suppliers. Ready for new challenges, he points out that 'Mulderbosch is similar in size to Neil Ellis...until you include the rosé production.