

Lightbulb moment

Wendy Appelbaum



Wendy Appelbaum has inherited the mantle of business achievement and philanthropy from her father, Donald Gordon, the founder of Liberty Life and Liberty International.

She is not only one of the founders and directors of Wiphold but also sits on the boards of numerous companies and organisations. Occupying a special place in her life is De Morgenzon, a Stellenbosch wine farm which has already produced a top-rated Chenin Blanc.

What was the first bottle of wine that all made sense and why?

A bottle of 1973 Kanonkop at the Fisherman's Grotto on an early date with my husband about 28 years ago.

What was your most memorable wine experience?

Participating in the demolition of a case of late '60s Chateau Margaux over the weekend at a friend's game farm.

What wine have you not yet tasted that you most want to?

The first serious De Morgenzon red.

What was the last wine you bought?

A litre box of red from Woolies for the Coq au Vin. I got it home and discovered that the recipe called for 1.5 l and I was impaled on the horns of a dilemma...

How big is your wine collection and where do you store it?

I am more of a consumer than a collector and I store most of it on my hips!

Your favourite South African wine producers?

Obviously De Morgenzon and Teddy Hall, but I also rate Glen Carlou, Hartenberg, Jordan and Thelema highly.

What was your most embarrassing moment to do with wine?

One night in Paris, a few years ago, we'd had a copious amount of Chablis and an enormous pile of oysters. Forgetting that the French drive on the "wrong" side of the road, I stepped off the sidewalk and narrowly avoided being killed. The resultant "traffic scene" and wildly gesticulating drivers were probably funnier, in retrospect, than embarrassing.

What do you like least about wine?

Sauvignon Blanc.

Your favourite meal?

Peri-peri chicken.

Which three people would you invite to your fantasy dinner party?

Sigmund Freud, Bill Gates and Princess Diana.

What is your current state of mind?

Hurricane warning.

What is your most treasured possession?

My diary.

And your greatest extravagance?

Wine farming.

How do you relax?

Sudoku, golf and most often with a glass of wine in my hand.

Who are your favourite writers?

After a maiden vintage 5 Star rating – unquestionably John Platter.

And musicians?

Mozart, Nana Mouskouri, Françoise Hardy and Leonard Cohen.

Your last holiday was spent at...

Plettenberg Bay.

Your favourite city in the world and why?

Paris. Great food, wine and style, fantastic shopping and staggering beauty.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?

A bottle of Champagne and a box of cigarettes to share with clever and amusing friends in my Stellenbosch home with its breathtaking views of this gorgeous country.