

Continent's best beers awarded at African Beer Cup

Gqeberha-based owner-run microbrewery Richmond Hill scooped the title of 'Best Beer in Africa' at the 2023 African Beer Cup, which is the largest beer competition on the African continent.



Richmond Hill team. Source: Supplied

The winning beer, a dark ale aged in Shiraz barrels with raspberries and peaches, grabbed a gold medal and then wowed the best-of-show judges, beating 231 other beers in the competition.

This was the fourth edition of the African Beer Cup, which is held annually in Cape Town. This year, 52 judges from 16 different countries joined forces to evaluate 232 beers from 20 different African nations. A total of 60 medals were awarded at an awards night held on 22 April at Woodstock Brewery in Cape Town.

The African Beer Cup is unique in that every beer in the competition is judged twice. All judging is blind, with judges knowing the beer style but not the manufacturer or beer name. Beers are judged to the Beer Judge Certification Program (BJCP) guidelines, which focus on stylistic accuracy rather than personal preference. Beers must reach a certain score threshold in order to be considered for a medal, with a maximum of one gold, one silver and one bronze per category.

The 13 gold medallists went head-to-head in a Best of Show round to determine the Best Beer in Africa. Rather than a trophy, the winner receives a custom painting to celebrate their win. This year's painting was created by Eastern Cape artist Chanel Louise Gardner, whose work focuses on using upcycled materials.



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Richmond Hill's founder and brewer Niall Cook commented on the brewery's triumph, "The African Beer C

has quickly become the most prestigious beer competition in Africa. To have a beer collect an award in the competition is an amazing achievement, however, to further walk away with the Best Beer in Africa Award for 2023 is on another level! Everyone at RHBC is on an all-time high. We are extremely proud as a company and are thankful for all our supporters that have driven us to reach these new heights.”

As well as medals and the overall prize, special recognition is awarded to a beer that showcases traditional African ingredients in a beer. The 2023 Basa African Celebration Award, sponsored by the Beer Association of South Africa, was awarded to, based in the Cape Winelands, for its African Wild Soul, a collaboration with Tolokazi Beer.

The beer is a blend of farmhouse ale and *umqombothi* (traditional sorghum beer), aged in wine barrels for two years. Soul Barrel, which [won the Best Beer in Africa in 2022](#), specialises in championing local ingredients and brewing traditions in their beers.

All the medal winners

2023 Best Beer in Africa

Richmond Hill Brewing Co - RHBC Barrel Aged Sour

Basa African Celebration Award

Soul Barrel Brewing x Tolokazi Beer - Wild African Soul

Non-Alcoholic Beer

Gold: Darling Brew - Just Naked (South Africa)

Silver: Heineken South Africa - Heineken 0.0 (South Africa)

Bronze: Signal Hill Products - Devil's Peak Hero (South Africa)

Standard American Beer

Silver: Lusaka Brewery - Mosi Lager (Zambia)

Bronze: Prospecton Brewery - Lion Lager (South Africa)

International Lager

Gold: Boet Beer Brewery - Lager (South Africa)

Silver: Jinja Brewery - Club Pilsner (Uganda)

Bronze: Mad Giant - Mad Giant Extra Fresh Lager (South Africa)

Czech Lager

Bronze: Newlands Brewery - Hansa Pilsener (South Africa)

Pale Malty European Lager

Gold: Swakopmund Brewing Company – Helles (Namibia)

Silver: Roof of Africa Craft Brewery - Roof Woodxxxxer (Namibia)

Bronze: Chamdor Brewery - Castle Double Malt (South Africa)

Pale Bitter European Beer

Silver: Roof of Africa Craft Brewery - Roof Pilsner (Namibia)

Bronze: Hoghouse Brewing Company - Hoglite Kolsch (South Africa)

Amber Bitter European Beer

Silver: Roof of Africa Craft Brewery - Roof Dark Lager (Namibia)

Bronze: Whale Coast Brewing Co. - WCBC Lager (South Africa)

Dark European Lager

Silver: Whale Coast Brewing Co. - WCBC Dark Lager (South Africa)

Bronze: Crafty Dee's Brewing Co. Ltd – Dunkel (Tanzania)

German Wheat Beer

Silver: Swagga Brewery - Swagga Kristall Weiss (South Africa)

Bronze: Jack Black Brewing Company - Atlantic Weiss (South Africa)

British Bitter

Gold: Okavango Craft Brewery - Panhandle Pale Ale (Botswana)

Bronze: Clockwork Brewhouse - English Best Bitter (South Africa)

Pale Commonwealth Beer

Silver: Signal Hill Products - Devil's Peak First Light (South Africa)

Bronze: Saggy Stone Brewing Co. - Rocky River (South Africa)

Brown British Beer

Silver: Darling Brew - Gypsy Mask (South Africa)

Bronze: Afro Caribbean Brewing Company - Pirate Porter (South Africa)

Irish Beer

Silver: Swagga Brewery - Swagga Irish Red (South Africa)

Bronze: Okavango Craft Brewery - Old Bull Irish Stout (Botswana)

Dark British Beer

Gold: Ilesa Brewery - Trophy Extra Special Stout (Nigeria)

Silver: Birkenhead Brewery – Stout (South Africa)

Bronze: Black Eagle Brewing Company - Moedersmelk (South Africa)

Strong British Ale

Gold: 1000 Hills Brewing Co - The Fes (South Africa)

Pale American Ale

Silver: Aegir Project - Croc & Roll (South Africa)

Bronze: Afro Caribbean Brewing Company - Assimilation (South Africa)

Amber and Brown American Beer

Bronze: Saggy Stone Brewing Co. - California Steam (South Africa)

American Porter and Stout

Gold: Afro Caribbean Brewing Company - Grootslang (South Africa)

Bronze: Darling Brew - Arrowhead (South Africa)

IPA

Silver: Saggy Stone Brewing Co. - Citra Nova (South Africa)

Bronze: 254 Brewing Co - Sand Trap (Kenya)

Strong American Ale

Silver: Afro Caribbean Brewing Company - Space Llama (South Africa)

Bronze: Darling Brew - Warlord (South Africa)

Belgian Ale

Bronze: Crafty Dee's Brewing Co. Ltd - Wheat Beer (Tanzania)

Strong Belgian Ale

Gold: Specialty Beers (Ghana) Limited - Tale 5 - Farmhouse Ale (Ghana)

Silver: 254 Brewing Co – Muratatu (Kenya)

Bronze: Afro Caribbean Brewing Company - What's Da Point (South Africa)

Monastic Ale

Gold: Charlie's Garage - Tripel Trubel (South Africa)

Historical Beer

Bronze: Richmond Hill Brewing Co - Twin Fin - Kellerbier (South Africa)

American Wild Ale

Gold: Richmond Hill Brewing Co - RHBC Barrel Aged Sour (South Africa)

Silver: Soul Barrel Brewing - Live Culture Cuvee (South Africa)

Bronze: Hazeldean Brewing Co. - Galactic Pear (South Africa)

Fruit Beer

Gold: Darling Brew - Tjaila Groovy Grapefruit (South Africa)

Bronze: Clockwork Brewhouse - Syrah Sour (South Africa)

Spiced Beer

Silver: Specialty Beers (Ghana) Limited Tale 7 - Ginger Triple (Ghana)

Alternative Fermentables Beer

Gold: Soul Barrel Brewing - Wild African Soul (South Africa)

Silver: Ukhamba / Tiny Keg Keg Can Co - Sorghum Sour (South Africa)

Bronze: Specialty Beers (Ghana) Limited Tale 8 - Cocoa Stout (Ghana)

Wood Beer

Bronze: Afro Caribbean Brewing Company - Summer (South Africa)

Specialty Beer

Gold: Richmond Hill Brewing Co - Lemon Yellow Sun (South Africa)

Silver: OC Brewery - Beet Boyz (South Africa)

Bronze: Signal Hill Products - Lucy Goes Cold (South Africa)

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