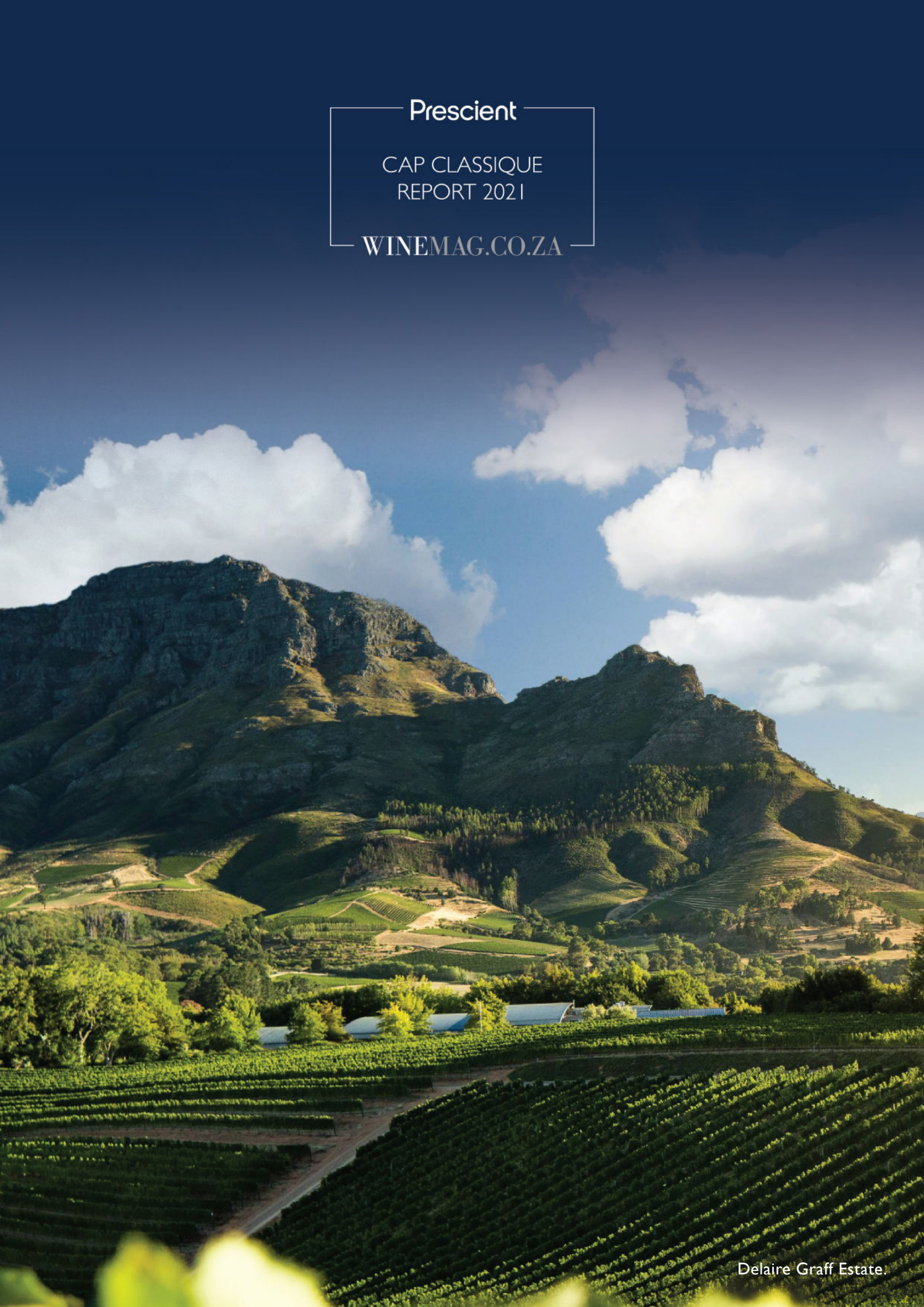


Prescient

CAP CLASSIQUE  
REPORT 2021

WINEMAG.CO.ZA



Delaire Graff Estate.

# ABOUT THE WINEMAG.CO.ZA TASTING PROGRAMME 2021



Winemag.co.za is set to produce 14 category reports over the course of the year. Each report will be based on the outcome of a blind tasting of wines entered within a specific category.

A report includes key findings, tasting notes for the top wines, buyer's guide and scores on the 100-point quality scale for all wines entered. Upon release, producers can purchase both Top 10 and regular rating stickers – consumers are encouraged to look out for these in the retail environment.

The year culminates in a gala event when the individual best wine in each category will be celebrated. These top-performing wines will subsequently be shown at tastings in both Johannesburg and London.

# JUDGING PROCEDURES

The judging panel was chaired by myself and further consisted of two trusted colleagues, namely James Pietersen of Wine Cellar, Cape Town merchants and cellarers of fine wine, and Cathy van Zyl MW. We tasted blind, labels out of sight. Ratings were done according to the 100-point system, final scores awarded on the basis of discussion that involved retasting where necessary rather than relying solely on arithmetic averaging.

*Christian Eedes,  
Editor, [Winemag.co.za](http://Winemag.co.za)*

# KEY FINDINGS

Cap Classique celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, South Africa's first bottle-fermented sparkling wine produced at Simonsig in 1971, but this tasting once again left the panel with more questions than answers.

There were 83 entries received from 43 producers for the second annual Cap Classique Report convened by Winemag.co.za and sponsored by multinational financial services company Prescient compared to 50 entries from 27 producers last year and again the outcome might again be viewed as somewhat disappointing with just 29% of the line-up (24 wines in total) rating 90-plus on the 100-point scale (compared to 26% in 2020).

In defence of the category, however, it might be argued that fixating only on wines to score 90-plus is too exacting. While a rating of 90 – 92 is defined as “Excellent” and that of 93 – 95 as “Outstanding”, 88 – 89 is defined as “Very good” and there are a further 27 wines that scored in this band.

Bottled-fermented sparkling wine is nothing if not a technically demanding category and if 61% of the category is at least “very good” then perhaps everything is on track. “It might be the case that most Cap Classique gets drunk locally but theoretically it is up against not just Champagne but Prosecco, Cava and any other form of bubbly – mediocrity is not an option,” noted panellist Cathy van Zyl MW.

Some general observations. The Blanc de Blancs style dominated the Top 10 with seven of the wines consisting of 100% Chardonnay. Of the remaining three, only Delaire Graff Sunrise Brut NV incorporated grape varieties not associated with Champagne including 64% Chenin Blanc

and 6% Cabernet Franc in addition to 30% Chardonnay but this is the second consecutive time that the wine has appeared in among the best wines overall so winemaker Morné Vrey would appear to be onto something...

Time on the lees for yeast autolysis to occur and impart extra complexity varies considerably across the Top 10, from a mere 14 months for the Altydgedacht Blanc de Blancs 2019 to an extreme 120 months for Boschendal Jean Le Long Prestige Cuvée 2009. The average, however, is 38.5 months reinforcing the notion that more is better than less.

What to pay for Cap Classique? Pricing seems to be even more mysterious than it is generally in the wine industry with the joint top-rated Miss Molly Blanc de Blancs 2015 the cheapest of the Top 10 at R150 a bottle through to R820 a bottle for Boschendal Jean Le Long Prestige Cuvée 2009. For the record, the average price is R311.10 a bottle.

Looking at all the wines to rate 90-plus, it is noteworthy that both Canto and L'Ormarins have three cuvées each in the mix – it's pleasing to see particular cellars perform well across the different sub-divisions of the category. Those looking for a bargain, meanwhile, should seek out the Cravate Brut 2016 from Worcester cellar De Wet which rates 90 points and has a cellar-door price of R150 a bottle.



## TOP 10 TASTING NOTES



### Miss Molly Blanc de Blancs 2015 (Môreson)

R150

Total production: 4 442 bottles Abv: 13.14%

*100% Chardonnay. Matured for 66 months on the lees. Subtle aromatics including blossom before citrus, peach and apple, a hint of reduction and vanilla – comes across as remarkably primary. The palate has lovely weight but also plenty of vibrant acidity and a fine mousse, the finish suitably dry.*



### Newstead Brut 2015

R245

Total production: 2 935 bottles Abv: 11.83%

*100% Chardonnay. Matured for 36 months on the lees. Complex aromatics of lemon and green apple plus pleasing autolytic character – think nougat, biscuit and toast. The palate is rich and vinous with plenty of flavour, bright acidity and pleasantly soft mousse while the finish is long and nicely savoury.*



### Altydgedacht Blanc de Blancs 2019

R220

Total production: 2 616 bottles Abv: 12.2%

*100% Chardonnay. Matured for 14 months on the lees. Some floral perfume before citrus and apple plus a slight toasty note on the nose. The palate is rich with a creamy mousse but there's equally a lovely line acidity, the finish long and savoury – shows admirable precision.*





## Canto Chardonnay Brut 2018

R195

Total production: 2 000 bottles Abv: 12.69%

100% Chardonnay. Matured for 24 months on the lees. A floral top note before citrus and apple plus some yeasty complexity on the nose. The palate is lean and taut – lovely pure fruit, punchy acidity and a fine mousse before a very dry finish.



## Boschendal Jean Le Long Prestige Cuvée 2009

R820

Total production: 6 670 bottles Abv: 13%

100% Chardonnay. Matured for 120 months on the lees – first disgorgement was September 2019. Complex and compelling aromatics – citrus and apple but also honey, ginger, liquorice and some yeasty character. The palate, meanwhile, is powerful and flavour-packed, vibrant acidity lending verve, the mousse still remarkably persistent. That extended period of lees contact has resulted in something quite particular.



## Villiera Chardonnay Brut 2017

R171

Total production: 650 bottles Abv: 11.88%

100% Chardonnay. Matured for 36 months on the lees. A hint of flinty reduction before citrus, peach and apple plus freshly baked bread on the nose. The palate displays good fruit purity to go with bright acidity and an explosive mousse, the finish long and dry. Invigorating to drink.





## Vinevenom Serenade 2015

R460

Total production: 1 631 bottles and 20 magnums Abv: 11.84%

68% Chardonnay, 18% Pinot Noir and 14% Pinot Meunier. Matured for 60 months on the lees and zero dosage. Some intriguing reduction before green apple and lemon on the nose while the palate is lean with punchy acidity and a fine mousse, the finish extra dry. For those who prefer a more austere style.



## Delaire Graff Sunrise Brut NV

R385

Total production: 9 700 bottles Abv: 12.5%

64% Chenin Blanc (Stellenbosch), 30% Chardonnay (Elgin) and 6% Cabernet Franc (Stellenbosch). Matured for 18 months on the lees. Attractive aromatics of citrus, peach, red apple and raspberry plus some yeasty complexity. A flavourful palate with bright acidity and an explosive mousse – pure and lively.



## J.C. Le Roux Scintilla Vintage Reserve 2014

R385

Total production: 6 500 bottles Abv: 11.23%

70% Chardonnay and 30% Pinot Noir. Matured for 36 months on the lees. Appealing autolytic character on the nose and palate – plenty of yeasty, toasty complexity to go with citrus, peach and apple. Rich and full with a creamy mousse and a savoury finish.





## Rhebokskloof Blanc de Blancs 2016

R165

**Total production: 3 280 bottles Abv: 12.5%**

*100% Chardonnay. 20% fermented in second-fill 300-litre barrels. Matured for 52 months on the lees. Intriguing autolytic notes of bruised apple and biscuit on the nose while the palate displays a good core of fruit, nicely integrated acidity and creamy mousse, the finish very dry. Subtle and sophisticated.*





## BUYING GUIDE: CELLAR-DOOR PRICES FOR WINES RATED 90+

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
Miss Molly Blanc de Blancs 2015 (Môreson)	94	R150
Newstead Brut 2015	94	R245
Canto Chardonnay Brut 2018	93	R195
Altydgedacht Blanc de Blancs 2019	93	R220
Villiera Chardonnay Brut 2017	92	R171
Vinevenom Serenade 2015	92	R460
Boschendal Jean Le Long Prestige Cuvée 2009	92	R820
Rhebokskloof Blanc de Blancs 2016	91 (Top 10)	R165
J.C. Le Roux Scintilla Vintage Reserve 2014	91 (Top 10)	R300
Delaire Graff Sunrise Brut NV	91 (Top 10)	R385
Villiera Woolworths Signature Vintage Brut 2014	91	R199.99
Delheim Blanc de Blancs Brut NV	91	R220
Boschendal Grande Cuvée Brut 2015	91	R270
De Wet Cravate Brut 2016	90	R150
L'Omarins Brut Classique Rosé NV	90	R165
Canto Chardonnay/Pinot Noir Brut 2018	90	R180
Canto Pinot Noir Brut 2017	90	R180
L'Omarins Brut Rosé 2015	90	R190
L'Omarins Blanc de Blancs 2013	90	R230
L'Avenir Brut Rosé 2017	90	R235
Quoin Rock Black Series 2014	90	R350
Graham Beck Ultra Brut 2015	90	R370
Spier R.D Brut 2013	90	R395
Graham Beck Cuvée Clive 2015	90	R780

# COMPLETE SCORES A - Z

NAME	WINE OF ORIGIN	SCORE
Abingdon Savoir Faire Methode Traditionnelle 2017	Kwazulu-Natal	82
Abingdon Savoir Faire Rosé Methode Traditionnelle 2017	Kwazulu-Natal	86
Alain Cajeux Brut Chardonnay 2018	Western Cape	88
Allée Bleue Brut 2015	Walker Bay	84
Allée Bleue Brut Rosé 2015	Franschhoek	85
<b>Altydgedacht Blanc de Blancs 2019</b>	<b>Cape Town</b>	<b>93</b>
Anura Brut 2014	Western Cape	87
Black Elephant Vintners & Co. Blanc de Blancs Brut NV	Franschhoek	85
Boschendal Brut NV	Western Cape	87
Boschendal Brut Rosé NV	Western Cape	88
Boschendal Grande Cuvée Brut 2015	Elgin	91
<b>Boschendal Jean Le Long Prestige Cuvée 2009</b>	<b>Western Cape</b>	<b>92</b>
Boschendal Luxe Nectar Demi Sec NV	Western Cape	86
<b>Canto Chardonnay Brut 2018</b>	<b>Durbanville</b>	<b>93</b>
Canto Chardonnay Pinot Noir Brut 2018	Durbanville	90
Canto Pinot Noir Brut 2017	Durbanville	90
Canto Shiraz Brut 2018	Durbanville	88
Cavalli Capriole 2019	Stellenbosch	88
Creation Elation Brut Nature 2016	Walker Bay	89
Croydon Vineyards Covenant Brut 2018	Cape Coast	86
De Grendel Brut 2017	Cape Town	88
De Grendel Proposal Hill Pinot Noir Brut Rosé 2016	Cape Town	86
<b>Delaire Graff Sunrise Brut NV</b>	<b>Western Cape</b>	<b>91</b>
Delheim Blanc de Blancs Brut NV	Stellenbosch	91
DeMorgenzon Brut NV	Stellenbosch	89
De Wet Cravate Brut 2016	Worcester	90
Graham Beck Blanc de Blancs 2016	Robertson	88
Graham Beck Bliss Nectar NV	Western Cape	87
Graham Beck Bliss Nectar Rosé NV	Western Cape	85
Graham Beck Brut NV	Western Cape	87
Graham Beck Brut Rosé NV	Western Cape	88
Graham Beck Cuvée Clive 2015	Western Cape	90
Graham Beck Pinot Noir Rosé 2015	Western Cape	86
Graham Beck Ultra Brut 2015	Robertson	90
Groot Constantia Brut Rosé 2017	Constantia	88
Groote Post Brut NV	Darling	85
Groote Post Brut Rosé NV	Darling	84
<b>J.C. Le Roux Scintilla Vintage Reserve 2014</b>	<b>Western Cape</b>	<b>91</b>
Ken Forrester Sparklehorse 2017	Stellenbosch	87
Kleine Zalze Brut Rosé NV	Western Cape	85
Kleine Zalze Brut NV	Western Cape	87
Kleine Zalze Vintage Brut 2015	Western Cape	88

Krone Borealis Vintage Cuvée Brut 2018	Western Cape	82
Krone Borealis Vintage Cuvée Brut 2019	Western Cape	89
Krone Vintage Rosé Cuvée Brut 2018	Western Cape	88
Krone Vintage Rosé Cuvée Brut 2019	Western Cape	85
L'Avenir Brut Rosé 2017	Stellenbosch	90
L'Omarins Blanc de Blancs 2013	Western Cape	90
L'Omarins Brut Classique NV	Western Cape	88
L'Omarins Brut Classique Rosé NV	Western Cape	90
L'Omarins Brut Rosé 2015	Western Cape	90
Maingard Blanc de Blancs Brut 2018 (Dieu Donné)	Franschhoek	81
Mariëtte Chardonnay Blanc de Blancs 2015	Breedekloof	88
Mooiplaas Duel Brut NV	Stellenbosch	87
<b>Miss Molly Blanc de Blancs 2015 (Môreson)</b>	<b>Franschhoek</b>	<b>94</b>
Newstead Annabelle's Rosé 2017	Plettenberg Bay	88
<b>Newstead Brut 2015</b>	<b>Plettenberg Bay</b>	<b>94</b>
Peter Falke Signature Noelina 2016	Stellenbosch	88
Pongrácz Blanc De Blancs NV	Western Cape	88
Pongrácz Brut NV	Western Cape	87
Pongrácz Desiderius 2013	Western Cape	86
Pongrácz Rosé NV	Western Cape	83
Quest NV (Du Toitskloof)	Western Cape	88
Quest Rosé NV (Du Toitskloof)	Western Cape	87
Quoin Rock Black Series 2014	Western Cape	90
<b>Rhebokskloof Blanc de Blancs 2016</b>	<b>Paarl</b>	<b>91</b>
Rickety Bridge Blanc de Blanc NV	Franschhoek	85
Rickety Bridge Blanc de Blanc 2017	Franschhoek	83
Spier Brut 2018	Stellenbosch	89
Spier Brut Rosé 2019	Elgin	88
Spier R.D Brut 2013	Coastal Region	90
Tanzanite Brut NV	Western Cape	88
Tokara Blanc de Blancs 2013	Elgin	87
Van Loveren Christina Brut NV	Robertson	89
Van Loveren Christina Brut Rosé 2018	Robertson	86
<b>Villiera Chardonnay Brut 2017</b>	<b>Stellenbosch</b>	<b>92</b>
Villiera Monro Brut 2014	Stellenbosch	88
Villiera Tradition Brut NV	Western Cape	89
Villiera Tradition Brut Rosé NV	Stellenbosch	88
Villiera Woolworths Signature Vintage Brut 2014	Stellenbosch	91
<b>Vinevenom Serenade 2015</b>	<b>Elgin</b>	<b>92</b>
Wildeberg Météorique Brut Blanc de Blancs NV	Coastal Region	84
Windfall Mendola Blanc de Blanc 2015	Robertson	88

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