

Prescient

BEST WINES
SOUTH AFRICA 2022

WINEMAG.CO.ZA

ALL WINES TASTED BLIND

CONTENTS

3 Introduction & Judging Procedures

4 Best Overall

Winery of the Year

Best White

Best Red

8 Best of Category

Best Cape White Blend

Best Chardonnay

Best Sauvignon Blanc

Best Sauv-Sem Blend

Best Cabernet Sauvignon

Best Cape Bordeaux Red Blend

Best Signature Red Blend

13 Dry Dock Liquor

14 Contact Details





INTRODUCTION

Winemag.co.za reviewed a total of 590 wines across 10 categories in its various reports sponsored by multinational financial services company Prescient over the course of the year. Each report was based on the outcome of a blind tasting of wines entered within the specific category.

JUDGING PROCEDURES

We employed a three-person tasting panel, tasting blind, labels out of sight. Ratings were done according to the 100-point system, final scores awarded based on discussion that involved retasting where necessary rather than relying solely on arithmetic averaging.

TASTERS

Christian Eedes – Winemag.co.za editor (Panel chair)

Ndabezinhle Dube – Food & Beverage Operations Manager at the President Hotel, Cape Town

Spencer Fondaumiere, chairman of the South African Sommelier Association

Malu Lambert – Wine Writer

James Pietersen – CEO of Wine Cellar

Francois Rautenbach, Singita Premier Wine Direct General Manager

Jolette Steyn – Head of Sales and Imports, Wine Cellar

BEST OVERALL

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WINERY OF THE YEAR



Wildeberg

The Wildeberg brand belongs to Boutinot, the UK wine company originally founded by prominent industry figure Paul Boutinot, but which was bought out by management in 2013. Needing a home for its SA operations, Boutinot acquired a 140ha lifestyle farm in Franschhoek in 2016 which has now taken on the Wildeberg name. JD Rossouw, previously of DGB, was appointed winemaker in September 2017 while 10ha of vineyard consisting of Chardonnay, Semillon, Petite Sirah and Syrah was planted in 2018, a 350-tonne capacity cellar becoming operational just in time for this year's harvest (Rossouw has a mandate to identify great sites across the Western Cape).

Wildeberg proved to be the most successful winery overall with one wine judged best in category, this being the Semillon 2021 with a rating of 94, and another five wines making the Top 10 in their respective categories, namely Wildeberg Red 2021 (96 points), Coterie by Wildeberg Semillon & Sauvignon Blanc 2020 (94 points), Coterie by Wildeberg Grenache & Syrah 2021 (94 points), Coterie by Wildeberg Chenin Blanc & Grenache Blanc 2021 (91 points) and The Tea Leaf 2021 (91 points).



BEST WHITE OVERALL BEST CHENIN BLANC



Bellingham

The Bernard Series Old Vine Limited Release 2021

ABOUT BELLINGHAM

Bellingham was founded by Fredagh and Bernard Podlashuk when they acquired Franschhoek property Belle en Champ in 1943. Today, the brand is owned by producer-wholesaler DGB, viticulturist Heinie Nel and winemaker Richard Duckitt given license to source grapes from across the Western Cape.

TASTING NOTE

Grapes from three vineyards planted in 1971, 1982 and 1983, one in Durbanville and the other two in Bottelary. One component fermented spontaneously in foudre, concrete tank and amphorae and another in 300-litre barrels, 30% new while maturation lasted around 10 months. Compelling aromatics with top notes of floral perfume and hay before citrus and peach plus some leesy complexity. A dense core of fruit is offset by driving acidity, the finish long and dry. A very classy wine of poise and detail.



BEST RED OVERALL

BEST SHIRAZ



Eenzaamheid

Shiraz 2020

ABOUT EENZAAMHEID

Eenzaamheid is situated in Agter-Paarl. The name of the farm is Dutch for “solitude” and refers to its isolation from Cape Town when it was named in 1693. Janno Briers-Louw is the seventh generation of his family to farm here, the land used for the growing of wheat in addition to wine grapes as well as the raising of cattle and sheep.

TASTING NOTE

20% whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for 11 months in larger format oak barrels. Expressive aromatics of red berries, musk, fynbos, cured meat, pepper and spice while the palate has a great core of fruit with zippy acidity and crunchy tannins.

Harmonious and packed with flavour.

BEST OF CATEGORY

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BEST CAPE WHITE BLEND

Beaumont New Baby 2019

30.5% Chenin Blanc, 19.5% Sauvignon Blanc, 19.5% Semillon, 19.5% Colombar and 11% Chardonnay. All varieties treated independently and then blended soon after harvest to get integration as soon as possible – spontaneously fermented and matured for 12 months in 400-litre barrels, 30% new.

Complex aromatics of citrus, apple and stone fruit plus some waxy character while the palate shows excellent density matched by a good line of acidity, the finish long and savoury. Rich and broad with great texture and layers of flavour.



BEST CHARDONNAY

Backsberg Smuggled Vines 2021

Grapes from Franschhoek. Fermentation started in stainless steel tanks and finished in barrel before maturation lasting 10 months. A top note of blossom before peach and citrus plus some intriguing leesy character on the nose. The palate, meanwhile, is wonderfully precise with a dense core of fruit, bright acidity and a finish that is long and savoury.

Winner of 2BFermControl kit worth R10 500.



BEST SAUVIGNON BLANC

Cape Point Vineyards Reserve 2020

Fermented and matured for 15 months in older oak. Complex aromatics with notes of hay, fynbos, citrus, white peach and a hint of blackcurrant while the palate shows great fruit purity matched by punchy acidity, the finish long and savoury. Layered and long, this shows great refinement.



BEST SAUV-SEM BLEND

Kershaw GPS Series Cape South Coast Semillon Sauvignon 2020

52% Semillon from Hemel-en-Aarde, 48% Sauvignon Blanc from Elgin. Semillon finished fermentation in barrels of which two-thirds were new, the Sauvignon Blanc fermented in tank. Maturation lasted four months. Citrus, white peach and blackcurrant on the nose while the palate has a dense core of fruit and punchy acidity before a dry finish. A seamless wine with just the right amount of weight and texture.



Winner of the Sylvain 225L Sylvain Blanc Barrel for the Sauvignon Blanc Semillon Blend Category.

BEST SEMILLON

Wildeberg 2021

Grapes from Franschhoek old vines. Spontaneously fermented in new and older oak. A wonderfully complex nose showing top notes of thatch and fynbos before citrus and peach while the palate has a dense core of fruit, bright acidity and a saline finish. Precise and detailed, this is very classy.



BEST CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Stellenbosch 1679 2019 (Koelenhof)

24 months in 300-litre French oak, 100% new. Compelling aromatics of red and black berries, flowers, herbs and pencil shavings. Great fruit definition, bright acidity and fine tannins, the finish super-dry. This has depth but also verve – pure, poised and wonderfully well structured.

Winner of 2BFermControl kit worth R11 000.



BEST CAPE BORDEAUX RED BLEND

Peter Falke Kanoa 2017

86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Cabernet Franc. Matured for 18 months in French oak, 20% new. Complex aromatics of red and black berries, violets, earth and undergrowth plus oak spice. The palate meanwhile shows great structure – a good core of fruit, an energising line of acidity and firm but fine tannins that provide a nicely grippy finish.

Winner of the Sylvain 225L Selection Barrels for the Cape Bordeaux Red Blend Category.



BEST SIGNATURE RED BLEND

Meinert Synchronicity 2017

48% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 20% Petit Verdot and 7% Pinotage. Components matured separately for 12 months in French oak, of which 35% was new, before being blended and returned to barrel for another 12 months. Red and black berries, violets, some leafiness, earth and spice on the nose while the palate shows good depth of fruit, bright acidity and firm but fine tannins, the finish long and savoury. Medium bodied and well balanced.





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TOP 10 WINES AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
DRYDOCKLIQUOR.CO.ZA



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Everything to do with South African fine wine.

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WILDEBERG



STELLENBOSCH



MEINERT



BEAUMONT



BACKSBERG



EENZAAMHEID