

— Prescient —

BEST WINES
SOUTH AFRICA 2024

— WINEMAG.CO.ZA —

ALL WINES TASTED BLIND

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INTRODUCTION

Winemag.co.za reviewed a total of 719 wines across 13 categories in its various reports sponsored by global 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 – director of Operations 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, wine and hospitality specialist

Jolette Steyn – Head of Sales and Imports, Wine Cellar

BEST OVERALL

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WINERY OF THE YEAR

Flagstone

It was back in 1998 that preeminent industry figure Bruce Jack founded Flagstone as a “virtual winery” with facilities initially located at the Waterfront in Cape Town. The project was immediately successful and there was soon a need for larger premises, Jack choosing to relocate to Somerset West, converting what had previously been the AECL dynamite factory into a winery in 2002 – the building was originally commissioned by Cecil John Rhodes in 1901 and designed by famous architect, Sir Herbert Baker.

In 2007/8, Constellation, then the world's largest wine company, acquired Flagstone, initially keeping Jack as its chief winemaker; his primary task being to uplift megabrand Kumala. Constellation changed its name to Accolade Wines in 2011.

In charge of production is Gerhard Swart – he joined the Flagstone team in 2008 and became head winemaker of Accolade in 2011 overseeing the quality of all South African produced wines. Today, Flagstone's capacity runs at around 400 tonnes per harvest.

As part of this year's Prescient Reports, Flagstone had one wine judged best in category, this being the Paradigm Chenin Blanc 2023 with a rating of 95, while another four wines made the Top 10 in their respective categories, namely Two Roads Chardonnay 2022 (94 points), Dragon Tree Cape Blend 2021 (93 points), Writer's Block Pinotage 2021 (93 points) and Music Room Cabernet Sauvignon 2020 (92 points).



BEST WHITE OVERALL

BEST SAUV-SEM BLEND



Morgenster

The Reserve White 2023

TASTING NOTE

60% Sauvignon Blanc, 40% Semillon. Matured for nine months in 600-litre barrels, 24% new. Lovely aromatics with top notes of flowers and herbs before citrus, peach and a hint of blackcurrant. The palate shows excellent fruit expression and bright acidity.

Not too thick textured, great detail and a long finish. Pure and precise.



BEST RED OVERALL BEST SHIRAZ



Raar

Carbonic Maceration 2023
(Riebeek Valley Wine Co)

TASTING NOTE

100% whole-bunch fermentation. Maturation in older 500-litre barrels. Complex and enticing aromatics of red and black berries, pomegranate, violets, fynbos and pepper on the nose. The palate shows good depth of fruit, fresh acidity and fine tannins. Layers of flavour and a long finish.

Winner of a set of Spiegelau glasses worth R4,000
from warewashing specialist Winterhalter.



BEST OF CATEGORY

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BEST CAPE WHITE BLEND

Kloovenburg Eight Feet White 2023

44% Grenache Blanc, 34% Chenin Blanc, 11% Roussanne and 11% Verdelho. Fermented and matured for seven months in cement tanks. Complex aromatics including some reduction before peach and orange, fynbos, nougat, fresh bread, earth and spice. The palate is dense and layered – pure fruit and bright acidity before a finish that's long and pithy.



BEST CHARDONNAY

Cape of Good Hope Serruria 2023

Matured for 10 months in 300-litre barrels, 24% new. 30% malolactic fermentation. A top note of fynbos before lemon, grapefruit and green apple plus hints of vanilla and oatmeal on the nose while the palate has a dense core of fruit and punchy acidity before a savoury finish. Wonderfully harmonious.



Winner of a 2BFermControl organic fermentation kit worth approximately R12,500.

BEST CHENIN BLANC

Flagstone Paradigm 2023

Grapes from an Agter-Paarl vineyard planted in 1979. 52% fermented in stainless steel tank, 48% in oak barrels, of which 65% were new, maturation lasting some six months. Pear, peach, citrus and hay on the nose. The palate is elegant and refined – pure fruit, fresh acidity and super-dry finish. Intricate and wonderfully poised.

Winner of a set of Spiegelau glasses worth R4,000 from warewashing specialist Winterhalter.



BEST MINORITY WHITE

Holden Manz Semillon 2021

From a 25-year-old vineyard. 75% fermented in stainless steel tanks, 25% spontaneously fermented in second-fill barrels. A pronounced waxy note before peach, brioche and spice on the nose. Rich and full, with good texture and well-integrated acidity, the finish long and savoury.



BEST SAUVIGNON BLANC

De Grendel Koetshuis 2023

Grapes from Darling and Lutzville. 10% fermented in neutral barrels. Top notes of hay and dried herbs before citrus and peach, a hint of blackcurrant and leesy complexity. The palate shows good fruit concentration and plenty of verve while the finish has pleasing saline quality. A wine of controlled power.



BEST ROSÉ

Landskroon Blanc de Noir Pinotage Off Dry 2023

Tank fermented. Enticing aromatics of cranberry, raspberry, cherry and peach plus flowers and herbs. The palate, meanwhile, is poised with concentrated fruit, punchy acidity and a dry finish. RS: 7.4g/l.



BEST CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Tokara Reserve Collection 2021

Matured for 22 months in barrel, 59% new. Red and black berries, violets, incense and vanilla on the nose. The palate is full but balanced – great depth of fruit, fresh acidity and fine, mouthcoating tannins. A wine of presence and texture.

Winner of a 2BFermControl organic fermentation kit worth approximately R12,500.



BEST CAPE BORDEAUX RED BLEND

Babylonstoren Nebukadnesar 2022

46% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 14% Cabernet Franc, 10% Petit Verdot, 5% Malbec. Matured for 23 months in French oak, 100% new. Complex aromatics of red and black berries, flowers, tea leaf, herbs, vanilla and spice. The palate shows great focus – a dense core of fruit and bright acidity, the finish gently savoury. Smooth textured in the best sense.



BEST MINORITY RED

Cirrus Pinot Noir 2021

30% whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for 14 months in older 500-litre barrels. Dark berries, mushroom and earth on the nose while the palate is full-bodied and smooth textured in the best sense – good structure and layers of flavour.



BEST PINOTAGE

Fairview Primo 2022

Matured for 18 months in barrel, 40% new. Cherry, plum, fynbos, earth and spice on the nose while the palate is dense and textured, fresh acidity lending balance, a saline quality to the finish. Precisely made.



BEST SIGNATURE RED BLEND

Zevenwacht The Tin Mine 2021

60% Shiraz, 35% Mourvèdre and 5% Grenache. A small portion of Shiraz was whole-bunch fermented. Matured for 12 months in 500-litre barrels, 20% new. Forthcoming aromatics of black berries, fynbos, lavender and pepper. The palate is medium-bodied with lemon-like acidity and fine, silky tannins, the finish nicely dry. Plenty of verve.



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Everything to do with South African fine wine.



CONTACT DETAILS

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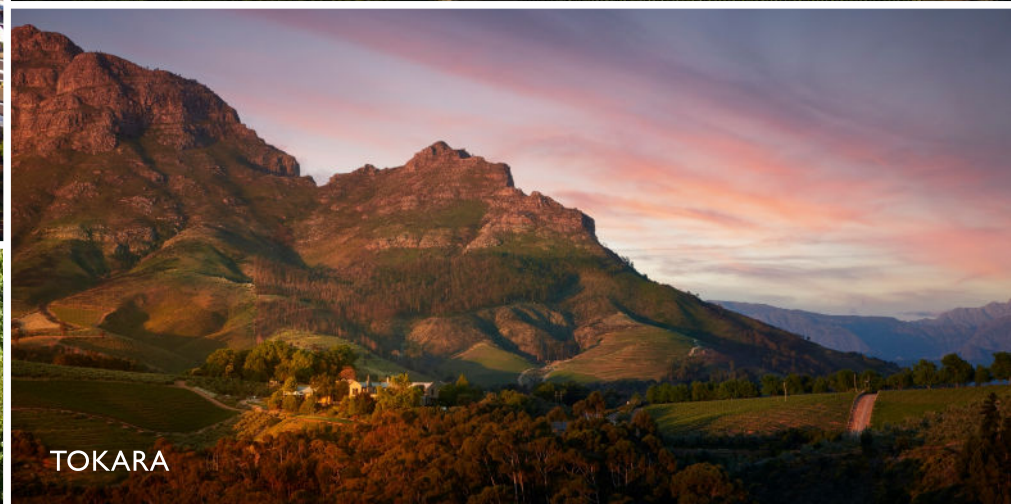
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ZEVENWACHT



TOKARA



FAIRVIEW