

Prescient

FUND SERVICES

SHIRAZ
REPORT 2025

WINE**MAG.CO.ZA**



ABOUT THE WINEMAG.CO.ZA TASTING PROGRAMME 2025

Winemag.co.za will release a series of category reports throughout the year with Prescient Fund Services as sponsor. Each report is 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 (wines ranked by quality relative to price) and scores on the 100-point quality scale for all wines entered. Upon publication, producers can purchase both Top 10 and regular rating stickers – consumers are encouraged to look out for these in the retail environment.

JUDGING PROCEDURES

The judging panel was chaired by me and further consisted of two trusted colleagues, namely wine writer Malu Lambert and wine and hospitality specialist Francois Rautenbach.

Ratings were done according to the 100-point system, with final scores determined through discussion and retasting when necessary, rather than relying solely on arithmetic averages.

Christian Eedes
Editor, Winemag.co.za

KEY FINDINGS

For this year's Shiraz Report sponsored by financial services company Prescient Fund Services, there were 71 entries from 53 producers with 36 (51%) rating 90-plus on the 100-point quality scale.

The category appears increasingly polarised – if not in the midst of an identity crisis – with the top-performing wines clearly well-conceived, while many of the rest come across as overwrought and lacking finesse.

Standout examples combine fragrant aromatics (red/black berries, flowers, fynbos, pepper) with fruit purity, bright acidity, and fine-grained tannins. Whole-bunch fermentation – partial or complete – is a common thread, lending lift, perfume, and texture. Oak usage skews toward older barrels to preserve elegance over power. Wines are consistently medium-bodied, favouring poise and freshness over overt ripeness or heaviness. Alcohol levels are moderate, reinforcing a style that prizes balance, energy, and finesse. Even the more structured examples avoid excess weight, instead showing seamless integration and refined mouthfeel. Overall, the trend is toward vivid, expressive, and finely structured Syrah with a strong sense of place.

The less successful wines, meanwhile, were often characterised by fruit left too long on the vine and then overworked in the cellar. As a result, they lacked vibrancy and came across as tired. Of particular concern was the noticeable presence of the spoilage yeast *Brettanomyces*, which appeared far more often than it has in recent times.

The average price of the 36 wines to rate 90-plus is R284 a bottle and of the Top 10 is R237. Offering the best quality relative to price is the De Wet 2023 with a rating of 91 and selling for R76 a bottle.

Riebeek Valley Wine Co, as producer of the wine judged best overall, wins a set of Nachtmann glasses worth R2,500 from warewashing specialist Winterhalter.

TOP 10 TASTING NOTES



De Grendel Op Die Berg Syrah 2023

Price: R355

Total Production: 19 200 bottles Abv 13.52%

50% whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for 12 months in second-, third- and fourth-fill barrels. Overtly fragrant with notes of red berries, fynbos, flowers and white pepper. Exceptional purity and poise – concentrated fruit, fresh acidity and powdery tannins, the finish dry and persistent.



Klein Amoskuil Die Nagmuis Bush Vine Syrah 2023

Price: R235

Total Production: 3 750 bottles and 52 magnums Abv 13.14%

Matured for 10 months in old oak. Pretty aromatics of floral perfume, tea leaf, and fynbos, followed by red berries and a hint of olive brine. The palate is beautifully structured without being overpowering, offering succulent fruit, bright acidity, and fine powdery tannins. A vivid and expressive wine.



Raar | Best Overall Carbonic Maceration 2024 (Riebeek Valley Wine Co)

Price: R165

Total Production: 3 333 bottles Abv 13.5%

100% whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for eight months in older 500-litre barrels. Gorgeous aromatics of violets, fynbos, red and black berries, orange, olive brine and white pepper. The palate has excellent fruit purity, vibrant acidity and lacy tannins, the finish long and dry.





Glenelly Glass Collection Syrah 2022

Price: R180

Total Production: 74 900 bottles Abv 14.36%

Partial whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for 12 months in older 500-litre barrels. Red and black berries, lavender, pomegranate and pepper. Medium bodied with good freshness and tightly knit tannins, the finish deeply savoury.



Groot Phesantekraal Syrah 2023

Price: R185

Total Production: 14 000 bottles Abv 13.96%

20% whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for 12 months in barrel, 20% new – 92% French and 8% American oak. Red and black berries, fynbos, rose and pepper on the nose while the palate is marked by succulent fruit, bright acidity and crunchy tannins. Pure and energetic – juicy and fresh, yet not lacking in weight.



Kasteelberg Syrah 2024 (Riebeek Valley Wine Co)

Price: R260

Total Production: 3 340 bottles Abv 13.5%

30% whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for nine months in older oak. Red and black berries, floral perfume, and a hint of cured meat on the nose. Pure and vibrant, with good fruit density, supple tannins, and a dry finish. A well-balanced, seamless wine.





Stellenbosch Reserve Kruithuis Syrah 2022

Price: R200

Total Production: 17 000 bottles Abv 14.31%

Partial whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for 16 months in older barrels. Red and black berries, floral perfume, fynbos, pepper and a hint of vanilla on the nose. Good fruit weight, fresh acidity and pleasantly firm tannins. A well-balanced, polished wine.



Von The Sir 2023

Price: R200

Total Production: 1 850 bottles Abv 14.8%

90% Shiraz, 10% Durif. 30% whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for 15 months in barrel, 17% new. Red and black berries, floral perfume, earth and pepper. The palate is dense and smooth textured in the best sense, yet retains freshness. Good fruit depth and powdery tannins.



De Grendel Op Die Berg Syrah 2022

Price: R355

Total Production: 15 600 bottles Abv 13.23%

50% whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for 12 months in second-, third- and fourth-fill barrels. Red berries, rose, and white pepper on the nose. The palate is light-bodied, with pure fruit, fresh acidity, and silky tannins. Delicate and charming.





Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection Syrah 2022

Price: R230

Total Production: 70 784 bottles Abv 14%

Matured for 18 months in 300-litre barrels, 30% new. Heady aromatics of red and black berries, lilies, toast, and pepper. The palate is powerful, with dense fruit balanced by zesty acidity and a firmly austere finish. Polished, persistent, and compelling.



HONORABLE MENTIONS

Because final ratings are determined by averaging the scores of three judges, decimal places come into play. As a result, the following wines fell just short of the Top 10 on 93 points:



Diemersdal 2023 | Price: R130

Van Loveren Christiena Syrah 2022 | Price: R230

Windmeul 2022 | Price: R80

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

Wine	Score	Price
Raar Carbonic Maceration 2024 (Riebeek Valley Wine Co)	95 – Best Overall	R165
Klein Amoskuil Die Nagmuis Bush Vine Syrah 2023	95	R235
De Grendel Op Die Berg Syrah 2023	95	R355
Glenelly Glass Collection Syrah 2022	94	R180
Groot Phesantekraal Syrah 2023	94	R185
Stellenbosch Reserve Kruithuis Syrah 2022	94	R200
Von The Sir 2023	94	R200
Kasteelberg Syrah 2024 (Riebeek Valley Wine Co)	94	R260
Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection Syrah 2022	93	R230
De Grendel Op Die Berg Syrah 2022	93	R355
Windmeul 2022	93	R80
Diemersdal 2023	93	R130
Van Loveren Christiena Syrah 2022	93	R230
Stellenzicht Arenite Syrah 2023	92	R225
Zandvliet Kalkveld 2022	92	R277
Mont Rochelle Syrah 2023	92	R335
Vinevenom Spektra 2022	92	R360
Kloovenburg Riebeekberg Syrah 2022	92	R600
De Wet 2023	91	R76
Cavalli Syrah 2023	91	R160
La Motte Syrah 2021	91	R210
Zandvliet Kalkveld 2021	91	R277
Paardenkloof The Long Road 2021	91	R320
Wildeberg Red 2023	91	R450
Rust en Vrede Syrah 2022	91	R450
Eagles' Nest Reserve 2022	91	R495
Quoin Rock 2021	91	R750
Stellenrust 2023	90	R109
KFK Reserve 2021 (Stellenview)	90	R180
Perdeberg The Dry Land Collection Tenacious 2021	90	R190
Diemersdal Syrah 2024	90	R215
Stellenrust Peppergrinder's 2022	90	R250
Zandvliet 2023	90	R250
La Petite Ferme 2022	90	R360
Babylonstoren 2022	90	R375
Kleine Zalze Family Reserve Syrah 2021	90	R495

COMPLETE SCORES: A-Z

Name	Wine of Origin	Score
Allée Bleue 2021	Franschhoek	89
Allée Bleue Single Vineyard Syrah 2022	Franschhoek	87
Alto 2020	Stellenbosch	87
Babylonstoren 2022	Simonsberg-Paarl	90
Bellevue 2023	Stellenbosch	87
Benguela Cove Estate Syrah 2022	Walker Bay	89
Bruce Jack Ghost in the Machine 2023	Western Cape	88
Bruce Jack Tumbleweed Big Sky Syrah 2023	Overberg & Piekenierskloof	89
Cape Five Reserve 2022 (Stellenview)	Coastal Region	89
Cape of Good Hope Riebeeksrivier Syrah 2020	Riebeeksrivier	87
Cavalli Syrah 2023	Coastal Region	91
Cederberg 2021	Cederberg	89
Creation Reserve Syrah 2021	Walker Bay	87
De Grendel Op Die Berg Syrah 2022	Ceres Plateau	93
De Grendel Op Die Berg Syrah 2023	Ceres Plateau	95
De Wet 2023	Worcester	91
Diemersdal 2023	Cape Town	93
Diemersdal Syrah 2024	Durbanville	90
Eagles' Nest Reserve 2022	Constantia	91
Eenzaamheid 2023	Agter-Paarl	89
Fairview The Beacon 2021	Swartland	89
Flagstone Dark Horse 2020	Cape Coast	87
Fuselage Side Slip 2022	Paarl	89
Gentis Badlands 2022 (Thor Vintners)	Swartland	89
Gentis Ronin Syrah 2022 (Thor Vintners)	Coastal Region	89
Glenelly Glass Collection Syrah 2022	Stellenbosch	94
Great Five Reserve 2021 (Stellenview)	Coastal Region	89
Groot Constantia 2021	Cape Town	89
Groot Phesantekraal Syrah 2023	Cape Town	94
Inselberg Katalyst Syrah 2023	Agter-Paarl	89
Kasteelberg Syrah 2024 (Riebeek Valley Wine Co)	Swartland	94
KFK Reserve 2021 (Stellenview)	Coastal Region	90
Klein Amoskuil Die Nagmuisk Bush Vine Syrah 2023	Swartland	95
Kleine Zalze Family Reserve Syrah 2021	Stellenbosch	90
Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection Syrah 2022	Stellenbosch	93
Kleinood Tamboerskloof Syrah 2020	Stellenbosch	88
Kloovenburg Riebeekberg Syrah 2022	Riebeeksborg	92
Kruger Family Reserve 2021 (Stellenview)	Stellenbosch	89
La Motte Pierneef Atelier 2020	Western Cape	88
La Motte Syrah 2021	Franschhoek	91
La Petite Ferme 2022	Franschhoek	90
Meinert The Graduate Syrah 2020	Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley	88
Meinert The Graduate Syrah 2022	Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley	88

Mellish Family Vineyards Bakenkop Syrah 2022	Durbanville, Cape Town	88
Mont Rochelle Syrah 2023	Franschhoek	92
Mountain Ridge 2020	Breedekloof	87
Paardenkloof The Long Road 2021	Bot River	91
Perdeberg The Dry Land Collection Tenacious 2021	Coastal Region	90
Peter Falke Alani 2020	Stellenbosch	88
Quoin Rock 2021	Simonsberg- Stellenbosch	91
Raar Carbonic Maceration 2024 (Riebeek Valley Wine Co)	Swartland	95
Rust en Vrede Syrah 2022	Stellenbosch	91
Samesyn Syrah 2023	Cape Agulhas	89
Stellenbosch Reserve Kruithuis Syrah 2022	Stellenbosch	94
Stellenrust 2023	Stellenbosch	90
Stellenrust Peppergrinder's 2022	Stellenbosch	90
Stellenzicht Arenite Syrah 2023	Stellenbosch	92
Strandveld Syrah 2022	Elim	87
Tokara Reserve Collection Syrah 2021	Stellenbosch	87
Tokara Reserve Collection Syrah 2022	Stellenbosch	88
Tokara 2021	Western Cape	89
Van Loveren Christiena Syrah 2022	Robertson	93
Vinevenom Spektra 2022	Swartland	92
Von The Sir 2023	Swartland	94
Waterford Kevin Arnold 2020	Stellenbosch	87
Wildeberg Red 2023	Franschhoek	91
Windmeul 2022	Coastal Region	93
Zandvliet 2023	Robertson	90
Zandvliet Hill of Enon Small Berry Pick 2022	Robertson	89
Zandvliet Kalkveld 2021	Robertson	91
Zandvliet Kalkveld 2022	Robertson	92

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GLENELLY



DE GRENDEL



KLEINE ZALZE



STELLENBOSCH RESERVE



GROOT PHESANTEKRAAL



KLEIN AMOSKUIL