



Prescient

FUND SERVICES

CAPE BORDEAUX
RED BLEND
REPORT 2025

WINEMAG.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, Francois Rautenbach, wine and hospitality specialist, and wine writer Malu Lambert.

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 Cape Bordeaux Red Blend Report sponsored by financial services company Prescient Fund Services, there were 48 entries from 38 producers with 28 (58%) rating 90-plus on the 100-point quality scale.

A strong showing from the category, much in line with last year when 38 of 64 entries (59%) cleared the 90-point mark. These are typically high-profile, top-end wines, and producers are clearly compelled to bring their very best.

Overt greenness (linked to methoxypyrazine) is now virtually absent. The finest examples show the fruit density and structure to rival any region in the world. Some wines are fruit-forward, clean and fresh – perfectly valid if pricing remains modest – while others aim for plushness but falter through lack of verve and shape.

As expected, quality comes at a price: the average for 90-plus wines is R436 a bottle, rising to R511 for the Top 10. Best value goes to Silver Myn Argentum 2023 from Zorgvliet (90 points, R115).

Cavalli, as producer of the wine judged best overall, wins shipping services worth R10 000 from Aspiring Couriers.

TOP 10 TASTING NOTES



Cavalli | Best Overall Warlord 2022

Price: R315

Total Production: 7 416 bottles Abv 14%

71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 6% Malbec, 6% Petit Verdot, 6% Cabernet Franc. Matured for 18 months in 225-litre barrels, 35% new. Enticing aromatics of red and black berries, leafiness, earth, incense, vanilla, and spice. The palate shows good fruit concentration, bright acidity, and firm yet fine tannins. Succulent without sweetness, a precise wine.



Vriesenhof Jan Boland Coetzee 2023

Price: R165

Total Production: 22 000 bottles and 1 050 magnums Abv 14.07%

49% Merlot, 28% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Cabernet Franc. Matured for 18 months in older oak. Cassis, violets, tea leaf, earth on the nose while the palate is powerful – dense and smooth textured, the finish savoury.



Alto M.P.H.S. 2021

Price: R995

Total Production: 600 bottles Abv 14.2%

50% Cabernet Sauvignon, 50% Cabernet Franc, matured for 18 months – the former in new oak, the latter in second-fill. Red and black berries, potpourri, herbs and cigar box on the nose. The palate has good fruit concentration, fresh acidity and tannins that are resolving nicely, the finish gently savoury. A statuesque wine being full but balanced.





De laire Graff Botmaskop 2021

Price: R420

Total Production: 37 433 bottles and 730 magnums Abv 14.9%

54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Cabernet Franc, 11% Petit Verdot, 8% Merlot. Matured for 16 months in barrel, 40% new. The nose shows cassis, floral perfume, tea leaf, earth and pencil shavings. Great structure – excellent fruit depth, bright acidity and firm but not coarse tannins. A wine of refinement.



La Petite Ferme Verdict 2023

Price: R410

Total Production: 800 bottles Abv 13.5%

50% Cabernet Franc, 50% Cabernet Sauvignon. Matured for 15 months in 225-litre barrels, partially new. Red and black berries, flowers, herbs, vanilla and spice on the nose while the palate is well structured with good fruit weight, freshness and grip. Conveys depth without showiness.



Tokara Director's Reserve Red 2021

Price: R595

Total Production: 46 000 bottles Abv 14.46%

70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Petit Verdot, 10% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 2% Malbec. Matured for 22 months in barrel, 47% new. Attractive aromatics of red and black berries, floral perfume, some leafiness and pencil shavings. The palate shows plenty of finesse and precision – pure fruit, fresh acidity and silky tannins.





Anthonij Rupert Optima 2021

Price: R280

Total Production: 350 000 bottles Abv 14.5%

Grapes from Franschhoek and Darling. 37% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 28% Cabernet Franc and 6% Malbec. Each component was matured separately for 20 months in barrel, 30% of which was new, before blending. Red and black berries, pencil shavings, earth, undergrowth and a touch of reduction on the nose. The palate is medium bodied and elegant – good freshness, fine-grained tannins, the finish savoury.



Ernie Els Signature 2021

Price: R870

Total Production: 6 670 bottles Abv 13.5%

60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 5% Malbec, 5% Petit Verdot. 95% matured for 18 months in barrel, 50% of which was new, with the remaining 5% aged for eight months in amphora. The nose shows violets, cassis, milk chocolate and pencil shavings. The palate is full and upright – dense fruit and fresh acidity before a dry finish. Good maturation potential.



Warwick Trilogy 2021

Price: R730

Total Production: 28 815 bottles Abv 14.5%

49% Cabernet Franc, 48% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Merlot. Matured for 24 months in barrel, 39% new. Red and black berries, herbs, and subtle evolved notes on the nose. The palate displays good fruit concentration, layered flavors, and tightly packed tannins; broad yet retaining freshness.





Grand Vin de Stellenbosch 2022 (Le Grand Domaine)

Price: R325

Total Production: 4 500 bottles Abv 14.3%

70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, 6% Petit Verdot, 4% Cabernet Franc. Matured for 12 months in older oak. Red and black berries, violets, some leafiness, earth and pencil shavings on the nose. The palate is full but balanced – concentrated sweet fruit offset by fresh acidity, the tannins fine. Long and dry on the finish.



HONOURABLE 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 92 points:



Fleur du Cap Laszlo 2021 | Price: R596

Franschhoek Cellar

The Last Elephant 20214 | Price: R590

Vriesenhof Kallista 2022 | Price: R450

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

| Wine | Score | Price |
|---|-------------------|-------|
| Vriesenhof Jan Boland Coetzee 2023 | 95 | R165 |
| Cavalli Warlord 2022 | 95 - Best Overall | R315 |
| La Petite Ferme Verdict 2023 | 94 | R410 |
| Delaire Graff Botmaskop 2021 | 94 | R420 |
| Tokara Director's Reserve Red 2021 | 94 | R595 |
| Alto M.P.H.S. 2021 | 94 | R995 |
| Anthonij Rupert Optima 2021 | 93 | R280 |
| Ernie Els Signature 2021 | 93 | R870 |
| Grand Vin de Stellenbosch 2022 (Le Grand Domaine) | 92 | R325 |
| Warwick Trilogy 2021 | 92 | R730 |
| Vriesenhof Kallista 2022 | 92 | R450 |
| Franschhoek Cellar The Last Elephant 2021 | 92 | R590 |
| Fleur du Cap Laszlo 2021 | 92 | R596 |
| Nederburg Double Barrel Reserve 2023 | 91 | R145 |
| Quest One 2020 | 91 | R220 |
| Nicolas van der Merwe Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc 2021 | 91 | R300 |
| Grand Vin de Stellenbosch 2021 (Le Grand Domaine) | 91 | R325 |
| Benguela Cove Estate Collage 2022 | 91 | R350 |
| Tokara Director's Reserve Red 2022 | 91 | R525 |
| Babylonstoren Nebukadnesar 2023 | 91 | R775 |
| Silver Myn Argentum 2023 (Zorgvliet) | 90 | R115 |
| Flagstone Treaty Tree Classique Red 2022 | 90 | R165 |
| Canetsfontein 1781 Organic 2023 | 90 | R178 |
| Nederburg Heritage Heroes The Brew Master 2021 | 90 | R270 |
| Diemersdal Private Collection 2021 | 90 | R400 |
| Durbanville Hills The Tangram Red 2022 | 90 | R420 |
| Eikendal Classique 2021 | 90 | R540 |
| Quoin Rock Red Blend 2022 | 90 | R750 |

COMPLETE SCORES: A-Z

| Name | Wine of Origin | Score |
|---|-------------------------|-----------|
| Alto M.P.H.S. 2021 | Stellenbosch | 94 |
| Anthonij Rupert Optima 2021 | Coastal Region | 93 |
| Babylonstoren Nebukadnesar 2023 | Simonsberg-Paarl | 91 |
| Benguela Cove Estate Collage 2022 | Walker Bay | 91 |
| Canetsfontein 1781 Organic 2023 | Coastal Region | 90 |
| Cavalli Warlord 2022 | Stellenbosch | 95 |
| Coterie Cabernet Franc & Malbec 2023 (Wildeberg) | Coastal Region | 89 |
| De Grendel Rubiyat 2020 | Coastal Region | 88 |
| Delaire Graff Botmaskop 2021 | Stellenbosch | 94 |
| Diemersdal Private Collection 2020 | Durbanville | 88 |
| Diemersdal Private Collection 2021 | Durbanville | 90 |
| Diemersdal Private Collection 2022 | Durbanville | 89 |
| Diemersdal Private Collection 2023 | Durbanville | 89 |
| Durbanville Hills The Tangram Red 2022 | Durbanville, Cape Town | 90 |
| Eikendal Classique 2021 | Stellenbosch | 90 |
| Ernie Els Signature 2021 | Stellenbosch | 93 |
| Flagstone Treaty Tree Classique Red 2022 | Coastal Region | 90 |
| Fleur du Cap Laszlo 2021 | Coastal Region | 92 |
| Franschhoek Cellar The Last Elephant 2021 | Stellenbosch | 92 |
| Franschhoek Cellar The Last Elephant 2022 | Stellenbosch | 89 |
| Glen Carlou Grand Classique 2022 | Coastal Region | 89 |
| Grand Vin de Stellenbosch 2021 (Le Grand Domaine) | Stellenbosch | 91 |
| Grand Vin de Stellenbosch 2022 (Le Grand Domaine) | Stellenbosch | 92 |
| Groot Constantia Gouverneurs Reserve 2022 | Constantia Cape Town | 88 |
| Holden Manz Big G 2020 | Franschhoek | 87 |
| La Petite Ferme Verdict 2021 | Franschhoek | 94 |
| Le Pommier Mac 2023 | Banghoek | 88 |
| Muratie Ansela van de Caab 2021 | Simonsberg-Stellenbosch | 86 |
| Nederburg Double Barrel Reserve 2023 | Coastal Region | 91 |
| Nederburg Heritage Heroes The Brew Master 2021 | Coastal Region | 90 |
| Nederburg The Winemasters Edelrood 2023 | Western Cape | 88 |
| Nicolas van der Merwe Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc 2021 | Stellenbosch | 91 |
| Peter Falke Kanoa 2020 | Stellenbosch | 89 |
| Quest One 2020 | Western Cape | 91 |
| Quoin Rock Red Blend 2022 | Simonsberg-Stellenbosch | 90 |
| Silver Myn Argentum 2023 (Zorgvliet) | Stellenbosch | 90 |
| Stellenbosch Reserve Vanderstel 2023 | Stellenbosch | 89 |
| Tokara Director's Reserve Red 2021 | Stellenbosch | 94 |
| Tokara Director's Reserve Red 2022 | Stellenbosch | 91 |
| Vergelegen Estate Red 2022 | Stellenbosch | 88 |
| Vriesenhof Jan Boland Coetzee 2023 | Stellenbosch | 95 |
| Vriesenhof Kallista 2022 | Stellenbosch | 92 |

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|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Vondeling Philosophie 2022 | Voor- Paardeberg | 89 |
| Walker Bay Vineyards Amesteca 2022 | Walker Bay | 89 |
| Warwick Trilogy 2021 | Simonsberg- Stellenbosch | 92 |
| Zonnebloem Lauréat 2022 | Stellenbosch | 88 |
| Zorgvliet Keurtjieskloof Red 2023 | Banghoek | 89 |
| Zorgvliet Richelle 2020 | Banghoek | 89 |



LE GRAND DOMAINE



ERNIE ELS



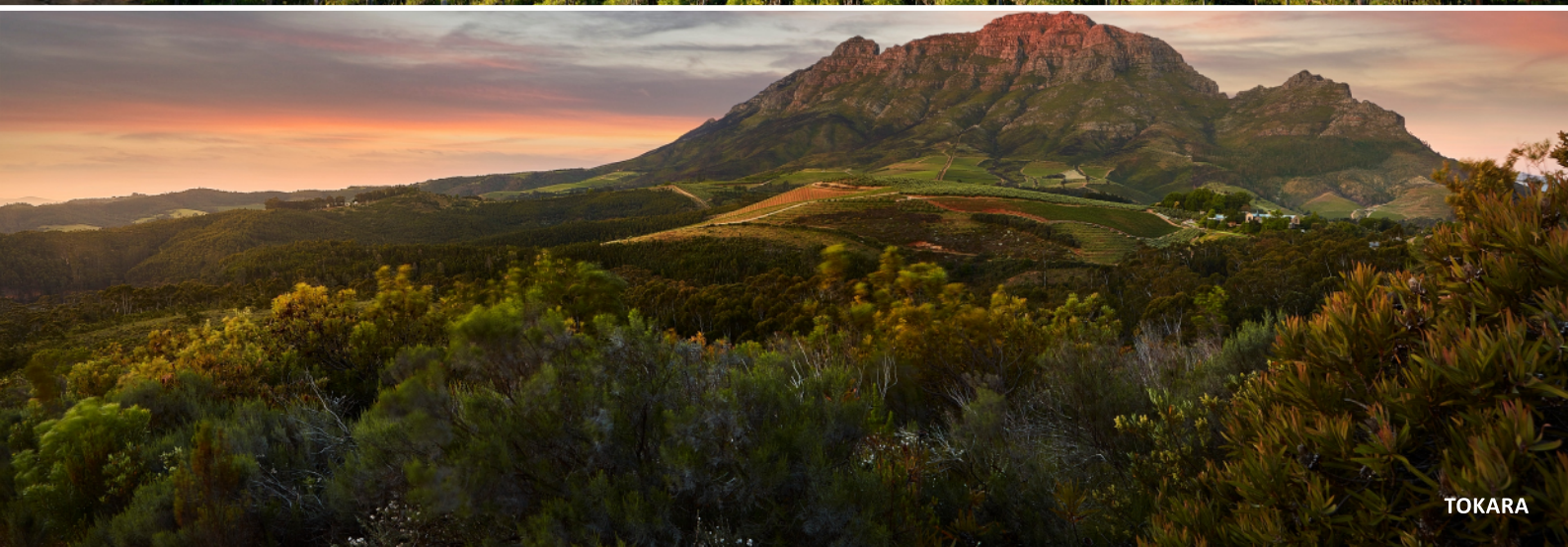
DELAIRE GRAFF



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