

Prescient

SHIRAZ
REPORT 2022

WINEMAG.CO.ZA



ABOUT THE WINEMAG.CO.ZA TASTING PROGRAMME 2022

Winemag.co.za is set to produce a series of category reports over the course of the year with multinational financial services company Prescient as sponsor. 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.

JUDGING PROCEDURES

The judging panel was chaired by me and further consisted of two trusted colleagues, namely Ndaba Dube, Food & Beverage Operations Manager at the President Hotel, Cape Town and Francois Rautenbach, Singita Premier Wine Direct General Manager. 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

KEY FINDINGS

Rotundone is a chemical compound responsible for the peppery, spicy aromas and flavours in Shiraz/Syrah wines. Interestingly around 20% of the population are unable to perceive the characteristics the compound imparts. The variation in individual sensitivity to rotundone suggests that the way wine is assessed by consumers or wine judges could vary substantially from one person to another. Moreover, the argument might well be made that even if tasters are able to perceive rotundone, they still might take a view that this is a characteristic that they don't like or value on account of its apparent harshness.

If, however, rotundone is viewed as a desirable property in Shiraz then it is worth noting that in general, cooler ripening and limited bunch exposure appear to favour the synthesis and/or accumulation of the compound. A key winery process to elevate pepper aroma and flavours, meanwhile, is whole-bunch fermentation, which is to say intact rather than destemmed bunches included in the fermenter – this should still be done with caution as it can also result in “cut-grass” and “herbal” aromas as well as increasing tannin concentration, which if overdone, can lead to excess astringency.

For this year's category report sponsored by Prescient, there were 99 entries from 82 producers with 59 (60%) rating 90-plus on the 100-point quality scale. Clearly, winemakers are now very adept at elevating the concentration of rotundone but the key question remains: Is this what consumers want?

One of the key reasons Merlot supposedly succeeds commercially is its reputation for being smooth textured rather than possessing any particular flavour. The best Shiraz, on the other hand, is nothing if not peppery and many will have quite grippy tannins as a result of whole-bunch fermentation. While Merlot tends to be safe but dull, Shiraz/Syrah certainly is not that. Suffice to say then, Shiraz is for those who aren't afraid of some flavour intensity.

Average price of the 59 wines to rate 90-plus is R247 a bottle and of the Top 10 is R186. Offering the best quality relative to price is Du Toitskloof with a rating of 94 and selling for R80 a bottle.

TOP 10 TASTING NOTES



Eenzaamheid 2020

Price: R195

Total Production: 4 000 bottles Abv 14%

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.



Wildeberg 2021

Price: R360

Total Production: 3 540 bottles Abv 14%

85% Syrah and 15% Cabernet Franc. 30% whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for 18 months in older oak. Hugely fragrant on the nose – red and black berries, musk, fynbos, pepper and spice. The palate shows lovely fruit purity, bright acidity and lightly grippy tannins – has a wonderful energy about it, the dash of Cab Franc adding extra intrigue.



Great Five Reserve 2019 (Stellenview Premium Wines)

Price: R135

Total Production: 12 000 bottles Abv 14%

Matured for 14 months in older oak. Grapes from Durbanville and Stellenbosch. Compelling aromatics of red and black berries, lilies, pepper plus some smoky reduction while the palate has good fruit density, bright acidity and smooth tannins. A wine with a sense of reined-in power.





Harry Hartman Somesay 2021

Price: R330

Total Production: 6 640 bottles Abv 12.52%

Grapes from Cederberg, Ceres-Plateau, Piekenierskloof, Stellenbosch and Swartland. 50% whole-bunch fermentation. Matured for 11 months in a combination of second- and third-fill 225-litre barrels plus a 1000-litre foudre. Complex aromatics with notes of red and black berries, lilies, fynbos, olive and pepper while the palate has great fruit concentration, fresh acidity and crunchy tannins. Not without heft despite the relatively low alcohol.



Org de Rac 2020

Price: R120

Total Production: 6 666 bottles Abv 14.49%

Matured with staves for 14 months in French and American oak barrels, 70% new. Heady aromatics of red and black berries, fynbos, cocoa and pepper. The palate is full bodied and flavourful with a dense core of fruit, bright acidity and nicely grippy tannins.



Diemersdal 2021

Price: R110

Total Production: 40 000 bottles Abv 13.57%

Matured for 12 months in 225-litre barrels, 30% new. Red berries, rose, fresh herbs and white pepper on the nose while the palate shows pure fruit and zippy acidity before a saline finish. A striking wine with lots of detail.





Du Toitskloof 2019

Price: R80

Total Production: 86 000 bottles Abv 14%

Grapes from Breedekloof and Swartland. Matured for 10 months using a combination of barrels and staves. Attractive aromatics of red and black berries, fynbos, musk and pepper while the palate is juicy and fresh with powdery tannins. Good concentration and texture.



Gentis Badlands 2021 (Thor Vintners)

Price: R250

Total Production: 1 236 bottles Abv 14.79%

86% Shiraz, 7% Ruby Cabernet and 7% Touriga Nacional. Aged for 10 months in 1 000-litre stainless steel tank with staves. Red and black berries, fynbos and pepper on the nose while the palate show good depth of fruit, fresh acidity and crunchy tannins. Full but balanced – no shortage of vibrancy.



Groote Post 2020

Price: R178

Total Production: 4 420 bottles Abv 14.60%

Matured for 14 months in 90% French and 10% American oak, 25% new. Aromatics of red and black berries, fynbos and flowers, pepper and spice while the palate displays dense fruit, bright acidity and crunchy tannins. This has weight but also drive – a polished wine with layers of flavour.





Sunkloof Reserve 2019 (Stellenview Premium Wines)

Price: R99

Total Production: 15 000 bottles Abv 14.38%

Matured for 14 months in older oak. Grapes from Durbanville and Stellenbosch. Compelling aromatics of red and black berries, floral perfume, fynbos, cured meat and pepper while the palate is full but balanced – good fruit concentration, bright acidity and a dry finish. Plenty of interest.



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

Wine	Score	Price
Eenzaamheid 2020	96	R195
Wildeberg 2021	96	R360
Org de Rac 2020	95	R120
Great Five Reserve 2019 (Stellenview Premium Wines)	95	R135
Harry Hartman Somesay 2021	95	R330
Du Toitskloof 2019	94	R80
Sunkloof Reserve 2019 (Stellenview Premium Wines)	94	R99
Diemersdal 2021	94	R110
Groote Post 2020	94	R178
Gentis Badlands 2021 (Thor Vintners)	94	R250
Groenland Premium 2017	93	R133
Glenelly Glass Collection 2019	93	R150
Cape Five Reserve 2019 (Stellenview Premium Wines)	93	R155
Meinert The Graduate Syrah 2019	93	R198.69
Rickety Bridge 2020	93	R200
Cederberg 2019	93	R260
Constitution Road 2020 (Robertson)	93	R285
De Grendel Op Die Berg 2020	93	R310
Arniston Bay 2021	92	R75
Black Beauty 2020 (Cavalli)	92	R115
Jan Harmsgat 2021	92	R145
Perdeberg The Dry Land Collection Tenacious 2018	92	R145
Stellenbosch Reserve Kruithuis Syrah 2020	92	R170
Driehoek Syrah 2019	92	R195
Haskell Pillars 2017	92	R385
De Grendel Elim 2019	92	R930/1.5L
Rust en Vrede Single Vineyard Syrah 2017	92	R1 200
MAN Family Wines Skaapveld Syrah 2020	91	R85
Bellevue 2020	91	R95
Boschendal 1685 2019	91	R142
Groot Phesantekraal Syrah 2021	91	R149
Villion 2019	91	R170
Dornier Siren Syrah 2018	91	R192
Bruce Jack Ghost in the Machine 2020	91	R215
Bon Courage Inkará 2020	91	R230
Arebeidsgenot 2021 (Meerhof)	91	R255
Alto 2018	91	R275
Saxenburg Private Collection 2020	91	R275
La Motte Pierneef Syrah Viognier 2018	91	R299
Solace 2020 (iona)	91	R330
Peter Falke Signature Alani 2019	91	R365
Paserene Union 2019	91	R650
Little Eagle 2017 (Eagle's Nest)	90	R125
Zandvliet 2018	90	R125
Benguela Cove Lighthouse Collection Syrah 2020	90	R150
Neil Ellis Groenekloof Syrah 2020	90	R155
Stellenbosch Vineyards Credo 2019	90	R165

Ridgeback 2017	90	R185
Old Road Wine Co. 12 Mile Syrah 2018	90	R233
Muratie Ronnie Melck 2018	90	R235
Babylonstoren 2020	90	R290
Stark-Condé Stellenbosch Syrah 2019	90	R290
Rust en Vrede Syrah 2019	90	R350
Old Road Wine Co. Pepper Wind Syrah 2020	90	R360
Boschendal Heritage Collection Grande Syrah 2019	90	R720
Mellish Bakenkop Syrah 2020	90	R220
Schultz Family Wines Pepper Street Syrah 2020	90	R180
Tamboerskloof Syrah 2018 (Kleinood)	90	R250
Tokara Reserve Collection Syrah 2018	90	R370

COMPLETE SCORES: A-Z

Name	Wine of Origin	Score
Allée Bleue Single Vineyard 2016	Franschhoek	88
Alto 2018	Stellenbosch	91
Arebeidsgenot 2021 (Meerhof)	Swartland	91
Arniston Bay 2021	Coastal Region	92
Babylonstoren 2020	Simonsberg Paarl	90
Backsberg Pumphouse 2020	Paarl	88
Bellevue 2020	Stellenbosch	91
Benguela Cove Estate Syrah 2019	Walker Bay	87
Benguela Cove Lighthouse Collection Syrah 2020	Walker Bay	90
Black Beauty 2020 (Cavalli)	Stellenbosch	92
Bon Courage Inkará 2020	Robertson	91
Boschendal 1685 2019	Cape Coast	91
Boschendal Heritage Collection Grande Syrah 2019	Stellenbosch	90
Bruce Jack Ghost in the Machine 2020	Cape South Coast	91
Cape Five Reserve 2019 (Stellenview Premium Wines)	Coastal Region	93
Cederberg 2019	Cederberg	93
Christiena Trousseau Syrah 2019 (Van Loveren)	Robertson	89
Constitution Road 2020 (Robertson)	Robertson	93
D'Aria The Soprano 2020	Cape Town	89
David Nieuwoudt Ghost Corner 2020	Elim	89
De Grendel 2019	Coastal Region	88
De Grendel Elim 2019	Elim	92
De Grendel Op Die Berg 2020	Ceres Plateau	93
Diemersdal 2021	Cape Town	94
Dornier Siren Syrah 2018	Stellenbosch	91
Driehoek Syrah 2019	Cederberg	92
Du Toitskloof 2019	Western Cape	94
Durbanville Hills Collectors Reserve The High Noon 2020	Durbanville Cape Town	88
Durbanville Hills Cool Climate 2019	Durbanville Cape Town	88
Eenzaamheid 2020	Agter-Paarl	96
Elgin Vintners Ironstone Syrah 2020	Elgin	89
Fat Bastard 2020	Robertson	89
Gentis Badlands 2021 (Thor Vintners)	Swartland	94
Glenelly Glass Collection 2018	Stellenbosch	89
Glenelly Glass Collection 2019	Stellenbosch	93
Great Five Reserve 2019 (Stellenview Premium Wines)	Coastal Region	95
Groenland Premium 2017	Bottelary Stellenbosch	93
Groot Pheasantkraal Syrah 2021	Cape Town	91
Groote Post 2020	Darling	94
Harry Hartman Somesay 2021	Western Cape	95
Haskell Pillars 2017	Stellenbosch	92
Jan Harmsgat 2021	Robertson	92
Jordan The Prospector 2020	Stellenbosch	88

KFK Reserve 2016 (Stellenview Premium Wines)	Coastal Region	89
Kleine Zalze Family Reserve 2018	Stellenbosch	87
Kleine Zalze Vineyard Selection 2019	Stellenbosch	89
Koelenbosch 2019 (Koelenhof)	Stellenbosch	88
Kruger Family Reserve 2018 (Stellenview Premium Wines)	Stellenbosch	88
La Motte Pierneef Syrah Viognier 2018	Western Cape	91
Land's End Cape Agulhas Syrah 2018	Cape Agulhas	89
Le Grand Domaine Grand Vin De Stellenbosch 2019	Stellenbosch	88
Leeuwenkuil Heritage Syrah 2018	Swartland	87
Lievland Heart's Ease Syrah 2019	Simonsberg Stellenbosch	88
Little Eagle 2017 (Eagle's Nest)	Constantia	90
MAN Family Wines Skaapveld Syrah 2020	Coastal Region	91
Meerhof 2020	Swartland	89
Meinert The Graduate Syrah 2019	Upper Hemel- en-Aarde Valley	93
Mellish Bakenkop Syrah 2020	Durbanville Cape Town	90
Muratie Ronnie Melck 2018	Simonsberg Stellenbosch	90
Nederburg The Manor House 2018	Western Cape	88
Neil Ellis Groenekloof Syrah 2020	Groenekloof	90
Noble Hill Field Atlas 2019	Simonsberg Paarl	87
Nuiba Second Post 2019	Piekenierskloof	88
Old Road Wine Co. 12 Mile Syrah 2018	Coastal Region	90
Old Road Wine Co. Pepper Wind Syrah 2020	Franschhoek	90
Org de Rac 2020	Swartland	95
Paserene Union 2019	Tulbagh	91
Perdeberg The Dry Land Collection Tenacious 2018	Coastal Region	92
Peter Falke Signature Alani 2019	Stellenbosch	91
Rhebokskloof 2019	Paarl	89
Rickety Bridge 2020	Western Cape	93
Ridgeback 2017	Paarl	90
Rietvallei 2019	Robertson	89
Robertson 2021	Robertson	88
Rust en Vrede Single Vineyard Syrah 2017	Stellenbosch	92
Rust en Vrede Syrah 2019	Stellenbosch	90
Saxenburg Private Collection 2020	Polkadraai Hills	91
Schultz Family Wines Pepper Street Syrah 2020	Paarl	90
Simonsig Merindol Syrah 2019	Stellenbosch	86
Solace 2020 (iona)	Elgin	91
Stark-Condé Stellenbosch Syrah 2019	Jonkershoek Valley	90
Stellenbosch Reserve Kruithuis Syrah 2020	Stellenbosch	92
Stellenbosch Vineyards Credo 2019	Stellenbosch	90
Stellenbosch Vineyards Credo 2020	Stellenbosch	88
Stellenview Reserve 2017	Stellenbosch	89
Sunkloof Reserve 2019 (Stellenview Premium Wines)	Coastal Region	94

Tamboerskloof Syrah 2018 (Kleinood)	Stellenbosch	90
The Fledge & Co Syrah 2019	Western Cape	89
Tokara Reserve Collection Syrah 2018	Stellenbosch	90
Under Oaks Reserve 2017	Coastal Region	89
Van Wyk Syrah 2019	Elgin	89
Vergelegen Reserve 2017	Stellenbosch	87
Vergelegen Reserve 2018	Stellenbosch	89
Villion 2019	Cape South Coast	91
Vrede en Lust Artisan Range Casey's Ridge Syrah 2018	Elgin	86
Vrede en Lust Lady J Syrah 2019	Western Cape	88
Wildeberg 2021	Franschhoek	96
Zandvliet 2018	Robertson	90
Zandvliet 2019	Robertson	89

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ORG DE RAC



WILDEBERG



STELLENVIEW



DU TOITSKLOOF



EENZAAMHEID