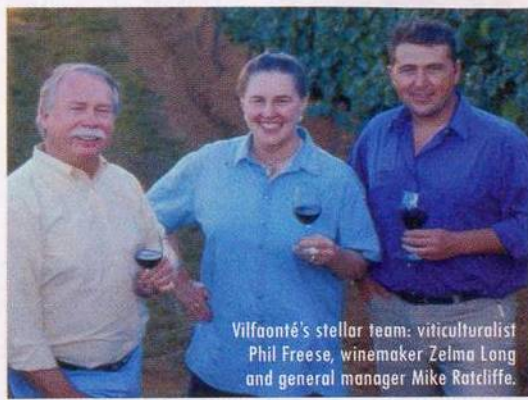


QUINTESSENTIAL CABS

THE WORLD'S BEST CABERNET SAUVIGNONS TO BUY NOW
VILAFONTÉ 2002 SERIES C



Vilafonté's stellar team: viticulturalist Phil Freese, winemaker Zelma Long and general manager Mike Ratcliffe.



South Africa

Vilafonté is in Paarl, one of South Africa's warmer grapegrowing regions, thus is ideal for producing premium reds. The vineyard site was chosen by Californians Phil Freese, designer of the first Opus One vineyard, and former Mondavi and Simi winemaker Zelma Long, after various consulting trips to the Cape convinced them of the area's potential. Add to the mix importer Bartholomew Broadbent and Vilafonté's general manager, Mike Ratcliffe, who hails from the South African winery Warwick Estate, and you have loads of international talent, experience and regional know-how.

Vilafonté's Series C is Cabernet-dominant, with 82 percent in its first commercial vintage. Its sister wine, the Series M, focuses more on Merlot and Malbec, although both bottlings utilize multiple Bordeaux varieties. Both, too, have the texture and acidity to age well. "Longevity is the mark of great wine, and it's what we seek," says winemaker Long. Of the Cabernet in particular, she "expect[s] the Series C to be a wine of longevity." — M.D.

92 Vilafonté 2002 Series C (Paarl); \$70. A fairly big (14.5% alcohol), chewy wine, but one that delivers waves of lush fruit. Plum and cassis notes are framed by hints of smoke and cedar; the merest hint of green herbs adds complexity without detracting. Long and supple on the finish. Drink now—2015. (11/15/2005) — W.E.

BALDACCI 2003 BRENDA'S VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON

California

says, "Every time I blended it, it

Cellars as well as with Paul



CHÂTEAU LATOUR 2003 PAUILLAC

France

Ask any enthusiast of fine Bordeaux wine best exemplifies the very best of Cabernet Sauvignon in the region; the answer almost inevitably will be this Pauillac first growth. This Pauillac first growth has the highest percentage of Cabernet in its vineyard (87 percent); in 2005, the percentage of the *grand vin* reached a lofty 87 percent.

But it is not just the Cabernet Sauvignon of Latour so special. It is the almost