

If Constantia could be captured in a bottle, this is how it would taste



By [Ilse van den Berg](#)

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Something big is about to happen in the South African wine industry and it is led by none other than top wine connoisseur and negociant, Wade Bales. According to Bales, South African wines are somewhat undervalued and wrongly positioned in the international market and he believes it is because we have something to learn from countries such as France and New Zealand.



What these countries have that South Africa lacks is regional brands: if you're in France and you want to enjoy a Cabernet-style wine, you'll look for a wine from Bordeaux. For Syrah, you'll choose something from the Rhône. And if you're in the mood for Chardonnay, Burgundy is the go-to choice.

Bales says this is the example South Africa needs to follow and I couldn't agree more.

So at the recent launch of Bales' "Regional Series" at his cellar in the Constantia Valley, the Constantia White was unveiled. With over 20 years' experience, Bales is always seeking out the pioneer winemakers – be they tucked in remote valleys, located in unexpected growing regions, or housed in an iconic cellar just down the road.

He aims to discover those producers who are making interesting, standout wines, to understand their winemaking philosophy, rate their quality, and share his treasured finds.

Bales approached the winemakers in the Constantia Valley and invited them to bring their best samples to help create a new regional blend that would sum up this high-end wine-producing region. The result was the Constantia White.



The Constantia White is thus the first release in the pioneering Wade Bales Regional Series which aims to identify South Africa's premium wine-producing regions, and emphasise the wine style that best defines that region.

The winemakers

The winemakers who partnered with Bales on this project include Brad Paton (Buitenverwachting), Justin Van Wyk (Constantia Glen), Jacques du Plessis (Constantia Uitsig now Elgin), Boela Gerber (Groot Constantia), Matthew Day (Klein Constantia), Gregory Brink Louw (Silvermist), and JD Pretorius (currently Steenberg, Warwick as of April 2019).

Tasting notes

The Constantia White 2018 is a classic blend of Sauvignon Blanc (67%) and Semillon (33%) and can only be described as a worthy wine that embodies the signature regional style of Constantia, one of the oldest wine appellations in the world.

It shows fresh aromas of passionfruit, nettle and lime, following through on the palate with luscious flavours of citrus and winter melon from the Sauvignon Blanc component. An undertone of sweet spice is derived from the Semillon barrel-fermented in French oak which adds complexity to this Constantia wine of origin.

If the Constantia Valley could be captured in a bottle, this is certainly how it would taste.

I for one will be keeping my eyes peeled for the rest of this Regional Series and I'm excited about what it'll do for the South African wine industry in the long run!

[For more, visit Wade Bales Wine Society.](#)



ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work here and here. Contact Ilse through her website here.
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