

# FIRESIDE WINES

As winter approaches, so does the opportunity to savour red wine in front of the fire. Here is a selection of five great South African reds worth gracing your winter glass. By **JARED RUTENBERG**

## KLEINE ZALZE FAMILY RESERVE CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2017

Since South Africa is synonymous with big and bold red wines, the first fireside choice is a red that lives up to that reputation. Klein Zalze has recently enjoyed a well-deserved spotlight after clinching the title of Platter's Top Performing Winery of the Year 2021 and then being awarded no less than seven five-star wines. From their premium Family Reserve Range, the Cabernet Sauvignon 2017 takes the spotlight here.

An oak regime of 70 per cent new, 30 per cent second and third fill, for 18 months, adds to the balanced wine which Klein Zalze refers to as "new-world opulence and old-world elegance". A bouquet of savoury tobacco, cassis, and mint then unfurls into a palate of seductive dark fruit for a complex and rewarding Cabernet Sauvignon.

[kleinezalze.co.za](http://kleinezalze.co.za)



## GREAT HEART RED BLEND 2019

From the cool kids of the Swartland, comes a new staff empowerment project - Great Heart Wines. The brand itself is collectively owned by the winery staff of Mullineux & Leeu Family Wines. Says Chris Mullineux, "Our intention in starting Great Heart was to uplift our team through a project that belongs to them; as the shareholders of Great Heart, our employees benefit directly from each bottle that is opened and enjoyed." An impressive 100 per cent of the profits to be exact.

Since Syrah is one of the varietals where the estate hangs its hat, you'll be pleased to know that the blend is driven by a 51 per cent Shiraz component, and then 34 per cent Tinta Barocca, and 15 per cent Cabernet Sauvignon. The Red Blend is not only wine with heart, but also surprisingly affordable at around R120 a bottle.

[greatheartwines.com](http://greatheartwines.com)



## CREATION CABERNET SAUVIGNON, MERLOT, PETIT VERDOT 2018

For white wine drinkers or those who lean towards wines that don't pack such a punch, perhaps look to one of the country's cooler climate offerings. Thanks to the slower ripening of fruit in these areas, acidity and elegance is achieved at no expense to flavour.

Hemel-en-Aarde heavyweight Creation is well-known for their Pinot Noir, but today it's another of their offerings that gets the attention.

The estate produces a Bordeaux blend featuring Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Petit Verdot. Expect to find blackberry and blackcurrant notes on both nose and palate and well-integrated tannins that allow for a maturation potential of ten years.

[creationwines.com](http://creationwines.com)



## BOPLAAS FAMILY VINEYARDS CAPE VINTAGE RESERVE 2017

If the thought of a winter's evening conjures up the image of savouring a glass of port, then look no further than Boplaas Family Vineyards. Port-styled wines are known as Cape Vintage in South Africa, and Boplaas Family Vineyards is one of the leaders among local producers. Accompanying its five-star accolade, the Cape Vintage Reserve Port 2017 was also recently rated Best SA Port by the Platter's South African Wine Guide.

The Portuguese varietals of Touriga Nacional, Tinta Barocca, Souzão, and Touriga Franca are used in the traditional old-world vinification methods. This wine is a decadent treat, and a worthy companion for earthy dishes, braised meat or venison. Buy a case so you can enjoy a few bottles now, but cellar half to enjoy their flavour development over the years.

[boplaas.co.za](http://boplaas.co.za)



## TOKARA DIRECTORS' RESERVE RED 2017

High on the slopes of Simonsberg Mountain, Tokara is one of the country's foremost producers. The Stellenbosch estate has featured more than once on the prestigious Drinks International's World's Top 50 Most Admired Wine Brands. The flagship Directors' Reserve Red 2017 is a Bordeaux blend featuring all five of the classic varietals.

A bouquet that shows black fruits translates into fine tannins with a hint of spice - further developed by the 22 months the wine spends in French oak, 54 per cent new. For anyone who's had the privilege of sitting in the tasting room at the estate, you'll instantly be taken back with a sip of this wine.

[tokara.com](http://tokara.com)



Not for Sale to Persons Under the Age of 18.