



DALE RICE/WINE

FROM SOUTH AFRICA, SOME WINES THAT ROAR

It's straight out of Africa.

But unlike a high-budget movie, this taste of another continent is having to do some legwork to become known. That's why Jan Du Preez was in Austin recently to introduce his lines of South African wines to local retailers and restaurateurs.

South Africa, he says, is the "oldest wine-producing country outside Europe," with production dating back more than 350 years. But that doesn't mean its wines are well-known or easily accepted.

Du Preez's 2003 Serengeti Sauvignon Blanc (\$12.99) was a fruity, highly acidic wine that didn't impress some local buyers, such as the folks at West Woods Liquor.

Du Preez had acknowledged at a tasting that it "may be too astringent for

American tastes," something he says he rectified with the next vintage. The 2004, he noted, will be much rounder.

"We learned very quickly," he said.

Ahhh, but his 2004 Leidersburg Sauvignon Blanc (\$16.99) is an animal of a different stripe.

"It bowled us over," says Buckley Wineholt, the wine steward at West Woods.

Wineholt is impressed by the richness, the grapefruit, the roundness and the hint of mango butter in this aged wine. I am, too. It's a Loire-style wine that can run with the big boys.

While sauvignon blanc is one of Du Preez's passions, the other is cabernet sauvignon.

His 2001 Leidersburg Cabernet Sauvignon (\$27.99), which is currently on back order, is huge and refined in Wineholt's view.

I couldn't agree more. This 100 percent cabernet sauvignon is powerful, with a great nose.

A big step up from the Serengeti line, the Leidersburg wines are the type that will enhance the view of South African products and open many more doors for Du Preez.

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Where to buy it: West Woods Liquor, 3201 Bee Cave Road