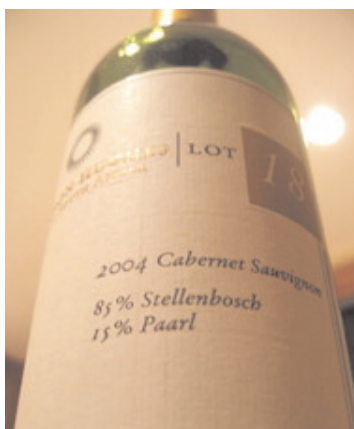


# The Corkdork - Wine and Food Musing

A log of my ever-increasing appetite for the taste of a great glass of wine and a good meal. Check in for tasting notes, Wine Blog Wednesday (WBW) posting and hosting, restaurant reviews and travel tips. Maybe a recipe or two.

## Cameron Hughes Goes Global

When last I saw Cameron Hughes, in July, he had hinted that the next step was to break out of California. Maybe even out of the U.S. to seek out serious wine-bin bargains. I just returned from a tasting with Cameron and my friend Jathan from Winexpression, and he unveiled the newest batch of his Costco and direct-mail distributed wines. This time including Lots 18 and 19 from South Africa. He now has buyers sniffing around all over the world for wines that can't be sold as super-premium bottlings, but can be released in the U.S. as small lot that have super quality to price ratios.



We were also flattered that he also let us opine on some bottles from other parts down-under that he has yet to decide upon for release. A couple had potential, though, I'm not sure any of us were convinced. I'll keep you readers posted.

Not only has he gone global, but he has also entered the Cal-Fizz market with yeasty Napa brew 8 years on the lees before disgorgement. This could be his most expensive bottle yet, at around \$17, but this kind of older Napa sparkler typically fetches around \$45. **If you see this in the coming months, snatch it up instead of reaching for the big name Cal sparkler or Cava.** There is an old yeast funk that quickly blows off to reveal a well layered, dense sparkler made from 50% Pinot and 50% Chardonnay. As far as I know, this doesn't have a lot number yet.

November 01, 2006 in Tasting Notes - Wine | [Permalink](#)

"The new World wines are the **Lot 18 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$9) that is 85% Stellenbosch and 15% Paarl from South Africa and the Lot 19 2004 Merlot (\$11) that is 100% Stellenbosch.** Cameron didn't specifically say, but they shared the same terroir, so I suspect they are from the same producer. **Both had a smokey, tarry nose and a dark, meaty, brooding mid-palate.** I would serve this with something grilled and juicy, like a hanger or skirt steak.

The other really notable wine of the evening was the **Lot 17 2004 Barbera from the Sierra Foothills.** When I tasted this in July, I was not terribly impressed and now think the bottle was just too young and maybe just a bit shocked. What a difference a few months make in the life of a wine. **It has very bright cherry notes, a beautiful color, and an ultra-ripe, spicy, sensuous, pleasantly raisin-y nose.** This one is another to look for next time you're at Costco, or seek out his direct sales website.