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STORY BEHIND THE WINE LABEL



Canadian David Bate makes Leopard Frog Vineyards in South Africa.

During the **Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival**, wineries visit Vancouver from all over the world. But some of them have closer ties to Canada than you might expect.

Take **Leopard Frog Vineyards** as an example. The wine may derive from 300-year-old vines growing on family-owned farms in the heart of the historic wine capital of Stellenbosch, South Africa, but the 2-year-old winery itself is the vision of Canadian winemaker and proprietor **David Bate**, and the company's frog-like logo is actually a westcoast Salish design.

ABOUT THE WINEMAKER

According to information given on Leopard Frog's website, Bate's Canadian roots go back a long ways. Over 125 years ago, his family emigrated to Canada from England and played a role in settling the British Northwest Territories. From there, the Bate family's history in Canada follows the westward expansion of the country, with members settling from Ontario to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and finally British Columbia.

Born and raised in Victoria, B.C., David John Bate is a fourth generation Canadian. He earned a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws and Master of Public Administration from the University of Victoria before earning a Post Graduate Diploma in Asia Pacific Management from the McRae Institute of International Management at Capilano College in Vancouver, British Columbia. He subsequently earned a Master of Business Administration from Institut des Hautes Etudes Economiques et Commerciales in Paris, France.

An investment banker by practice, David first fell in love with South Africa's vineyards in 1996. Determined to bring his family's agrarian traditions to South Africa, David studied the country's wine industry for over 10 years before launching Leopard Frog Vineyards in 2005. A graduate of the Cape Wine Academy, David subsequently completed a Master of Science from the Bordeaux International Wine Institute in France.

ABOUT THE WINE LABEL

In appreciation of the stature of First Nations' culture as the Old World of the New World and acknowledgement of the winemaker's birthplace, Bate commissioned well known Coast Salish artist Jody Wilson to create an emblem which interprets traditional First Nations' design in a contemporary style reflective of Leopard Frog's winemaking philosophy.

According to Bate, "the frog is one of the most important mythical figures of the Old World and the New World, with significance in the mysticism of China, Buddhism of India, sects of ancient Egypt, early Christian culture, Celtic traditions, shamanism, animism and many European fables. In First Nations' culture, the frog often symbolizes the ideal integration of earth and water in nature. Honouring this heritage, Leopard Frog's Coast Salish emblem represents the optimal integration of terroir and cépage in our wine."

The First Nations' frog is also a messenger of wealth, often bearing gifts of good fortune. Leopard Frog's Coast Salish emblem continues this custom as emissary of the wealth of subtle yet significant sensations unfolding in the bouquet and taste of every bottle of Leopard Frog wine.

On March 26, 2007, **Sanafir** restaurant in Vancouver will be holding a wine tasting with **Leopard Frog Vineyards** as its special guest. [Get the Information here.](#)