An Efficient Synthesis of (±)-Frondosin B using a Stille-Heck Reaction Sequence.

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Experimental Section

General:

Tetrahydrofuran (THF) was dried by distillation from sodium wire and benzophenone (sodium benzophenone ketyl) under nitrogen gas $(N_{2(g)})$. Dichloromethane (DCM) and dichloroethane (DCE) were dried by refluxing over CaH₂ under N_{2(g)}. *N*-methylpyrrolidinone (NMP) and ethanol were used as commercially supplied (anhydrous/reagent grade). Petroleum spirit (PS, 40-60°C fraction), *n*-hexane and water (H₂O) were purified by distillation. Additional solvent abbreviations used are as follows: ethyl acetate as EtOAc, diethyl ether as Et₂O. Brine herein refers to saturated aqueous NaCl.

Degas procedure: A typical degassing procedure is as follows: The solvent was stirred vigorously and a high vacuum [<5 mBar] was applied for 0.1 h, resulting in some effervescence. The flask was then backfilled with $N_{2(g)}$, and the procedure repeated (x 3) in order to remove all dissolved gases. For volatile solvents (*e.g.* THF) the procedure was performed at -78 °C.

Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC) was performed with 0.25 mm silica gel 60F plates with 254 nm fluorescent indicator (Merck). TLC plates were visualised with both ultraviolet light and vanillin or anisaldehyde development dip and heating. Products were isolated using silica gel 60, 230-400 mesh (Merck) or alumina (neutral, Brockmann grades I or II) column chromatography or plates where appropriate.

Microwave reactions were performed using a CEM Discover unit. Reactions were performed in sealed 10 mL vials with infrared temperature detection, the standard 300 W maximum power and (without ramp-time).

Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) spectra were recorded at 300.1 MHz for ¹H and 75.5 MHz for ¹³C, referenced to the solvent. ¹H-NMR spectra are reported in terms of chemical shift (δ , reported in ppm), multiplicity (s = singlet, d = doublet, t = triplet, q = quartet, dd = doublet of doublets, dt = doublet of triplets, ddd = doublet of doublet of doublets, td = triplet of doublets, tt = triplet of triplets, m = multiplet, m_c = centered multiplet), coupling constant (*J*, reported in Hz) and integration (number of hydrogens = H). ¹³C-NMR spectra are reported in terms of chemical shift (δ , reported in ppm), and the number of attached protons (C) = quaternary, (CH) = methine, (CH₂) = methylene, (CH₃) = methyl; (C=O) = carbonyl, this assignment was made on the basis of a *J*-modulated spin echo (J-MOD) experiment.

Low Resolution Mass Spectrometry (LRMS) data was obtained mass spectrometer equipped with an atmospheric pressure (ESI/APCI) ion source. High Resolution Mass Spectrometry (HRMS) data was obtained with an EI, ESI or APCI ion source, and reported in atomic mass units. Calculated values and names were taken from Chemdraw Ultra version 10.0 (2006) and were corrected where necessary. Melting points were determined with an electrothermal melting point apparatus and not corrected.

2-Bromo-5-methoxybenzofuran-3(2*H***)-one (10).** To a stirred suspension of CuBr₂ (670 mg, 3.0 mmol) in EtOAc (1.8 mL) was added a solution of 5-methoxybenzo[*b*]furanone **9** (300 mg, 1.5 mmol) in CHCl₃ (2.5 mL) in one portion and the reaction mixture stirred while an exothermic reaction took place, then for a further 1 h at RT. After this time the reaction was lowered into a 90°C oil bath and stirred at mild reflux for a further 1 h, then cooled and filtered. The pad of CuBr and product was washed with Et₂O (10 mL) and the volatiles removed under reduced pressure. Column chromatography of the resultant black oil on silica gel with Et₂O-PS (3:47) delivered ketone **10** as a pale yellow solid (87 mg, 0.36 mmol, 24%), mp = 64-65°C. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.27 (dd, *J* = 9.0, 2.7 Hz, 1H), 7.12 (d, *J* = 2.7 Hz, 1H), 7.06 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 6.48 (s, 1H), 3.81 (s, 3H). ¹³C-NMR (75.5 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 194.8 (C=O), 165.3 (C), 156.4 (C), 128.2 (CH), 118.1 (C), 114.8 (CH), 105.7 (CH), 76.6 (CH), 56.1 (CH₃). HRMS (+ESI) Calculated [C₉H₈BrO₃]⁺ (M+H⁺): 242.9657, found: 242.9648.

2-Chloro-5-methoxybenzofuran-3(2H)-one (11). To 5а stirred solution of methoxybenzo[b]furanone 9 (0.473 g, 2.88 mmol) in CHCl₃ (10 mL) at -10°C was added in one portion and as rapidly as possible SO_2Cl_2 (290 µL, 486 mg, 3.60 mmol). The reaction mixture was stirred 1 h, poured into brine (10 mL), the organic layer separated and aqueous layer extracted with DCM (3 x 50 mL). The combined organics were dried over MgSO₄ and the volatiles removed under reduced pressure to yield the crude product (0.807 g). Column chromatography on silica gel with Et₂O-PS (7:93) delivered ketone 11 as a pale-yellow solid $(0.477 \text{ mg}, 2.39 \text{ mmol}, 83\%), \text{mp} = 43-45^{\circ}\text{C}.$ ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.30 (dd, J =9.0, 3.0 Hz, 1H), 7.12 (d, J = 3.0 Hz, 1H), 7.09 (d, J = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 6.06 (s, 1H), 3.82 (s, 3H). ¹³C-NMR (75.5 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 194.3 (C=O), 166.0 (C), 156.2 (C), 128.6 (CH), 118.1 (C), 114.6 (CH), 105.6 (CH), 85.6 (CH), 56.1 (CH₃). HRMS (+ESI) Calculated $[C_9H_8ClO_3]^+$ (M+H⁺): 199.0162, found 199.0160.

2-Bromo-5-methoxybenzofuran-3-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (12)

To a stirred solution of 2-bromoketone **10** (71 mg, 0.29 mmol) in DCM (2 mL) at -78°C was added dropwise NEt₃ (140 μ L, 1.00 mmol) by syringe, then dropwise Tf₂O [59 μ L, 98 mg, 0.35 mmol, solution in DCM (1 mL)] by syringe. The reaction was allowed to return to RT while stirred for 20 h, then the volatiles were removed under reduced pressure. Column chromatography of the crude product on alumina (neutral, Brockmann Grade II) with Et₂O-PS (1:99) delivered triflate **12** as a colourless crystalline solid (80 mg, 0.213 mmol, 73%), mp = 46-47°C. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.36 (d, *J* = 9.6, 2.1 Hz, 1H), 6.96 (m, 2H), 3.86 (s,

3H). ¹³C-NMR (75.5 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 157.2 (C) 146.1 (C), 138.8 (C), 127.6 (C), 121.8 (C), 118.6 (CF₃, *J* = 321 Hz), 115.2 (CH), 112.7 (CH), 100.0 (CH), 55.9 (CH₃). HRMS (+ESI) Calculated [C₁₀H₇BrF₃O₅]⁺ (M+H⁺): 374.9150, found: 374.9146.

3-Trimethylstannyl-2-(but-3'-enyl)cyclohex-2-enone (14). Was prepared according to the previously published procedure.^{5a} ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 5.87 (m_c, 1H), 4.95 (m, 2H), 2.48 (t, *J* = 5.7 Hz, 2H), 2.38 (t, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 2H), 2.30 (m_c, 2H), 2.10 (m_c, 2H), 1.94 (m_c, 2H), 0.24 (s, 9H).

2-Chloro-5-methoxybenzofuran-3-yl trifluoromethanesulfonate (13). To a stirred solution of 2-chloroketone **11** (330 mg, 1.66 mmol) in DCM (12 mL) at -78°C under N_{2(g)} was added dry NEt₃ (771 μ L, 560 mg, 5.53 mmol). The pale yellow reaction mixture became an vivid green colour immediately and there was added Tf₂O (338 μ L, 564 mg, 1.99 mmol, solution in DCM [4 mL], dropwise over the course of 0.1 h), during which time the colour dissipated. The reaction mixture was allowed to return to RT while stirred for 14 h. After this time the volatiles were removed under reduced pressure. Chromatography of the brown crude oil on alumina (short column, neutral, Brockmann grade II) with EtOAc-PS (1:67) delivered triflate **13** as a pale yellow oil (548 mg, 1.66 mmol, 100%), mp = 47-48.5°C. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.35 (dd, *J* = 8.7, 0.9 Hz, 1H), 6.98 (dd, *J* = 8.7, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.96 (s_{br}, 1H), 3.87 (s, 3H). ¹³C-NMR (75.5 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 157.3 (C) 146.1 (C), 138.8 (C), 127.6 (C), 121.8 (C), 118.6 (CF₃, *J* = 321 Hz), 115.2 (CH), 112.7 (CH), 100.0 (CH), 55.9 (CH₃). HRMS (+ESI) Calculated [C₁₀H₇ClF₃O₅]⁺ (M+H⁺): 330.9655, found: 330.9652.

11-Methoxy-7-methylene-1,2,3,5,6,7-hexahydro-8-oxa-dibenzo[a,h]azulen-4-one (17a), 11-Methoxy-7-methyl-1,2,3,5-tetrahydro-8-oxa-dibenzo[a,h]azulen-4-one (17b), 9-Methoxy-7-methylene-1,2,3,5,6,7-hexahydro-12-oxa-dibenzo[a,e]azulen-4-one (18a), 9-Methoxy-7-methyl-1,2,3,5-tetrahydro-12-oxa-dibenzo[a,e]azulen-4-one (18b) and 6-Ethyl-10-methoxy-2,3-dihydrobenzo[b]naphtho[1,2-d]furan-4(1*H*)-one (20).

17a,b and 18a,b from 12: Zinc chloride (ZnCl₂, 42 mg, 0.31 mmol) was flame dried carefully in a Schlenk tube under vacuum and cooled under $N_{2(g)}$, NMP (2 mL) was added and the solution degassed (for a description of degas procedure see General). 2-Bromobenzo[*b*]furan-3-yl triflate **12** (58 mg, 0.154 mmol), Pd(dba)₂ (8.7 mg, 0.015 mmol) and TFP (8.1 mg, 0.035 mmol) were then added and the degas procedure repeated once. Stannane **14** (72 mg, 0.22 mmol) was added, the reaction mixture heated to 65°C for 0.2 h, then CuTC (3 mg, 0.016 mmol) was added and the reaction monitored by TLC, which showed a complete consumption of starting materials after 4 h. After a further 1.5 h the reaction was cooled, passed through a plug of alumina (neutral, Brockmann grade II) and the organics washed through with Et₂O (30 mL). The organics were then washed with H₂O (2 x 30 mL), the combined aqueous washings extracted with Et₂O (30 mL), the combined organics

washed with H₂O (2 x 10 mL), dried over MgSO₄ and the volatiles removed under reduced pressure. Planar chromatography of the yellow crude on silica gel with EtOAc-PS (3:17) delivered a mixture of **17a** and **17b** (low R_f, **a:b** 1:1 ratio, 23.3 mg, 0.079 mmol, 51%) as a pale yellow viscous gum and a separate fraction was isolated which contained a mixture of **18a** and **18b** (high R_f, **a:b** 2:1, 13.1 mg, 0.044 mmol, 29%).

This mixture of isomers **17a,b** was dissolved in ethanol (2 mL) and RhCl₃ (1.6 mg, 0.05 eq.) added. The brown reaction mixture was heated to 75°C and stirred for 5h, then cooled, poured into H₂O (10 mL) and extracted with Et₂O (3 x 5 mL). The combined extracts were dried over MgSO₄, and concentrated under reduced pressure to deliver the ketone **17b** (23.2 mg, 0.079 mmol, 100%) as a thick colourless gum which solidified upon standing at -20°C. The mixture of isomers **18a,b** isomerised to **18b** upon standing in CDCl₃ for 24h.

17b: mp = 111-112°C. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.51 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.27 (d, *J* = 2.7 Hz, 1H), 7.04 (dd, *J* = 9.0, 2.7 Hz, 1H), 5.81 (td, *J* = 6.9, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 3.95 (s, 3H), 3.12 (t, 6.0 Hz, 2H), 2.81 (m_{br}, 2H), 2.63 (t, 6.9 Hz, 2H), 2.24 (d, *J* = 1.2 Hz, 3H), 2.16 (m_c, 2H). ¹³C-NMR (75.5 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 197.2 (C=O), 159.0 (C), 156.1 (C), 148.9 (C), 146.2 (C), 128.2 (C), 127.5 (C), 126.9 (CH), 126.3 (C), 120.8 (C), 113.3 (CH), 112.1 (CH), 105.2 (CH), 56.2 (CH₃), 38.2 (CH₂), 29.2 (CH₂), 23.6 (CH₂), 23.5 (CH₂), 18.0 (CH₃). HRMS (+APCI) Calculated [C₁₉H₁₉O₃]⁺ (M+H⁺): 295.1332, found: 295.1323. Previously reported.^{3e}

18b: mp = 126-128°C. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.45 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.28 (d, *J* = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.03 (dd, *J* = 9.0, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 5.46 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 3.89 (s, 3H), 2.94 (t, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 2.74 (d, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 2H), 2.51 (t, J = 6.3 Hz, 2H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.13 (tt, 6.9, 6.0 Hz, 2H). ¹³C-NMR (75.5 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 193.9 (C=O), 155.9 (C), 154.1 (C), 149.7 (C), 141.1 (C), 130.0 (C), 127.9 (C), 127.0 (C), 125.9 (C), 120.6 (CH), 115.0 (CH), 112.1 (CH), 105.4 (CH), 56.1 (CH₃), 38.3 (CH₂), 26.4 (CH₂), 23.4 (CH₂), 22.3 (CH₂), 20.9 (CH₃). HRMS (+APCI) Calculated [C₁₉H₁₉O₃]⁺ (M+H⁺): 295.1332, found: 295.1325.

17a,b and 20 from 19 using Method A (see main text): To a microwave tube (2 mL capacity) under a stream of $N_{2(g)}$ was added caesium carbonate Cs_2CO_3 (freshly flame-dried under vacuum, 92 mg, 0.28 mmol). Chloroalkene **19** (see below) (47 mg, 0.14 mmol) was then added under $N_{2(g)}$ along with NMP (1.5 mL) and a tight septum cap fitted. The suspension was degassed (see General section) and the septum removed under a stream of $N_{2(g)}$, Pd(*t*-Bu₃P)₂ (14.5 mg, 0.028 mmol) added and a new septum cap fitted. The reaction mixture was stirred at 85°C under microwave irradiation for 1 h, after which time TLC analysis revealed complete conversion of the chloroalkene **19** to two lower R_f products. The reaction mixture was poured onto brine-H₂O (1:3, 20 mL), extracted with Et₂O (2 x 10 mL), the combined organics washed with H₂O (3 x 10 mL), brine (10 mL), then dried over MgSO₄ and the volatiles removed under reduced pressure to deliver the crude as an orange oil (60 mg). Planar chromatography on silica gel with Et₂O-DCM-PS (4:23:23) gave **17a,b** as a

yellow resin (**a:b** 1:1, 18.5 mg, 0.063 mmol, 41%) and **20** as a colourless amorphic solid (23.5 mg, 0.083 mmol, 59%).

20: mp = 112.5-113.5°C. ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.06 (s, 1H), 7.53 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.51 (d, *J* = 2.7 Hz, 1H), 7.08 (dd, *J* = 9.0, 2.7 Hz, 1H), 3.94 (s, 3H), 3.44 (t, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 2.99 (q, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 2.74 (t, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 2H), 2.32 (tt, *J* = 6.6, 6.3 Hz, 2H) 1.39 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 3H). ¹³C-NMR (75.5 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 197.7 (C=O), 156.1 (C), 151.3 (C), 138.6 (C), 128.4 (C), 126.9 [2 x inequivalent (C) signals], 125.9 (CH), 125.3 (C), 121.9 (C), 114.2 (CH), 112.2 (CH), 106.5 (CH), 56.2 (CH₃), 38.7 (CH₂), 26.9 (CH₂), 23.0 (CH₂), 22.7 (CH₂), 14.0 (CH₃). HRMS (+APCI) Calculated [C₁₉H₁₉O₃]⁺ (M+H⁺): 295.1332, found: 295.1327.

17a,b from 19 using Method D (see main text): To a microwave tube (10 mL capacity) under a stream of $Ar_{(g)}$ was added potasssium carbonate K_2CO_3 (freshly flame-dried under vacuum, 32.0 mg, 0.23 mmol). Chloroalkene 19 (se below) (25.4 mg, 0.077 mmol) was then added under Ar_(g) along with DMA (1.00 mL) and a septum cap fitted. The suspension was degassed (description: General) and the septum removed under a stream of Ar_(g), Pd(OAc)₂ (1.7 mg, 0.008 mmol) and XPhos (7.5 mg, 0.016 mmol) added and a microwave septum cap fitted. The reaction mixture was stirred at 100 °C under microwave irradiation for 0.5 h (CEM Discover, 300 watts/200 psi max, infrared temperature detector, typical power usage 5-6 watts), after which time TLC analysis (silica, heptane/EtOAc 4:1) revealed complete conversion of the 19 to a lower R_f spot [TLC eluent: heptane-EtOAc (1:5)]. The reaction mixture was poured onto brine-H₂O (1:3, 20 mL), extracted with Et₂O (2 x 10 mL), the combined organics washed with H_2O (3 x 10 mL), brine (10 mL), then dried over MgSO₄ and the volatiles removed under reduced pressure to deliver the crude as a brown solid (31 mg). Column chromatography of the crude on silica gel with heptane-EtOAc (1:7) followed and ketones 17a,b were delivered as a pale yellow solid (a:b 9:1, 18.7 mg, 0.064 mmol, 83%). This mixture was fully isomerised to 17b using RhCl₃ prior to characterisation (as described above).

2-(But-3-enyl)-3-(2-chloro-5-methoxybenzofuran-3-yl)cyclohex-2-enone (19). ZnCl₂ (341 mg, 2.50 mmol) was flame dried carefully in a round-bottomed flask under vacuum then cooled under $N_{2(g)}$, and NMP (4 mL) added and the stirred solution degassed (see General). 2-Chloroalkenyl triflate **13** (276 mg, 0.83 mmol), Pd(dba)₂ (47 mg, 0.083 mmol) and TFP (58 mg, 0.25 mmol) were then added. The reaction mixture became dark brown then pale yellow in colour and the degas procedure was repeated. Stannane **14** (389 mg, 1.24 mmol) was added and the reaction mixture heated to 65°C in an oil bath under $N_{2(g)}$ for 0.2 h. After this time CuTC (16 mg, 0.083 mmol) was added. TLC revealed a total absence of coupled product prior to copper salt addition but significant amounts within 0.1 h of its addition.

After a further 5 h heating the starting materials were consumed as indicated by TLC, the reaction was cooled and passed through a plug of alumina (neutral, Brockmann grade II) and

the organics flushed through with Et₂O (60 mL). The organics were washed with H₂O (2 x 100 mL), the combined aqueous washings extracted with Et₂O (30 mL), the combined organics washed with H₂O (2 x 30 mL), dried over MgSO₄ and the volatiles removed under reduced pressure. Column chromatography of the yellow crude product on silica gel with EtOAc-PS (1:19 then 7:93) delivered chloride **19** as a colourless viscous gum which became yellow when stored (258 mg, 0.78 mmol, 94%). ¹H-NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.37 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 6.93 (dd, *J* = 9.0, 2.7 Hz, 1H), 6.72 (d, *J* = 2.7 Hz, 1H), 5.56 (m_c, 1H), 4.84 (m, 2H), 3.84 (s, 3H), 2.74-2.59 (m, 4H), 2.43 (m, 1H), 2.29 (m, 1H), 2.18 (m, 2H), 2.10 (m, 2H). ¹³C-NMR (75.5 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 198.6 (C=O), 156.7 (C), 148.5 (C), 145.6 (C), 139.8 (C), 138.0 (CH), 137.7 (C), 127.8 (C), 116.2 (C), 114.8 (CH₂), 113.3 (CH), 111.8 (CH), 102.2 (CH), 56.0 (CH₃), 38.3 (CH₂), 33.2 (CH₂), 31.0 (CH₂), 26.7 (CH₂), 22.7 (CH₂). HRMS (+ESI) Calculated [C₁₉H₂₀ClO₃]⁺ (M+H⁺): 331.1101, found: 331.1100.









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