

2022 Cape South Coast Sauvignon Blanc Semillon

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 54% Sauvignon Blanc; 46% Semillon.

WINE OF ORIGIN: Cape South Coast (Elgin & Hemel-en-Aarde), South Africa.

OVERVIEW: As a winemaker, I visit a variety of vineyards that offer something different to those I normally use in Elgin where I'm based, and occasionally I come across something so fascinating that it deserves a closer look. In 2019 I discovered an old parcel of Semillon in Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge that showed elements of Semillon Gris grapes. This was followed up in 2020 by a lower-yielding Sauvignon Blanc parcel in Elgin that is trellised Smart-Dyson, opening up the canopy and allowing better aeration.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 4th April (Semillon); 24th March 2022 (Sauvignon Blanc)
Brix at Harvest: 23.2 (Average)

SEASON: 2022 follows 2021 as another cooler season. Winter had ideal conditions in that there was water availability throughout and the temperatures were lower than average. Compared to 2021 our average temperature was 0.8° cooler made possible by cooler minimum temperatures. Spring was favourably drier than average enabling a very even budding and shoot growth. However, it was also cool meaning that the growth cycle as per 2021 started 10 to 14 days later. As flowering and set commenced in late October, cooler and drizzly weather contributed to wonderfully lush canopies that required continuous management throughout the Spring and into early Summer. This verdant growth, later phenology, and cool weather extended and prolonged véraison and into the harvesting season. Summer itself was cooler and wetter leading to more challenges of fungal pressure especially given the canopies were denser. Harvest time in 2022 was eventually delayed on average by 10 to 14 days. There were pockets of intense heat during January that led to leaf losses especially those that had previously suffered from downy mildew. The upside is that no irrigation was required during the entire season thus maintaining healthy dam levels. Overall, the white wines have purity and freshness with fabulous aromatics and integrated natural acidity.

WINEMAKING: Grapes were hand-picked into small lug baskets. The Sauvignon Blanc was whole bunch pressed using a light sparkling wine pressing cycle before going to tank for 2 days of cold settling. After racking off the clean juice a small amount of light fluffy lees was added back. Meanwhile, the Semillon grapes were destemmed and crushed before being gently pressed into a stainless-steel tank. Natural fermentation started and after 2 days the fermenting Semillon juice was racked into oak barrels, of which 2/3rds were new and the 1/3rd had only been used previously for 4 months. The Sauvignon Blanc was fermented cool, between 12-14°C enabling a long, cool ferment to preserve all the delicate volatiles that exist in the must. The Semillon fermented between 15-20°C to allow better oak integration and allow some of the norisoprenoids to release. A light sulphuring followed to stop malolactic, and the lees was stirred using heavy dry ice blocks on the Sauvignon Blanc tanks and a bâtonnage rod for the Semillon. All together the wine stayed on its lees for around 4 months after which the batches were individually tasted and blended with a light fining and bottled.



BARREL SELECTION: A small number of artisanal coopers were selected, all from Burgundy and only French oak was chosen. Importantly, this wine was micro-vinified as a separate batch. Over the years we have developed an algorithm to ascertain which coopers work best and how many new and used barrels are utilised. In 2022 27% was new oak, and the remainder split evenly between 1st and 2nd fill barrels.

ALCOHOL: 13.5% **TOTAL PRODUCTION:** 3012 bottles were produced.

TASTING PROFILE: Pale Lemon, the aromas are lifted with pronounced notes of nettle, apple blossom, tangerine peel, khakibos, yellow pepper and some jasmine. On entry, the wine is creamy and juicy underpinned by a bracing, vivacious acidity. Flavours of green mango, lime marmalade, fresh herbs, mange tout and lemon curd circulate in the mid-palate, providing a saline, celery stick and saliva-inducing mouthfeel. The delicate spice of oak is only just there adding complexity to a focused, delineated wine. Bone dry, there is a freshness and zesty spine to this concentrated wine that finishes long and satisfying. Will keep nicely over the next 3-5 years.

/// WHAT3WORDS

Semillon: ///portals.dance.believe
Sauvignon Blanc: ///reliability.enclave.luxurious

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