

# 2018 Kershaw Elgin Chardonnay

RANGE: Clonal Selection

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Chardonnay made from Dijon clones CY96, CY95, CY76 and the Entav clone CY548.

WINE OF ORIGIN: Elgin, Western Cape, South Africa.

TOTAL VINEYARD PRODUCTION: 19.8 tons selected from 9 small parcels of Chardonnay.

HISTORY: In 2012, owner Richard Kershaw MW, established Richard Kershaw Wines to create clonally selected, site-specific, cool climate wine paradigms from apposite noble grapes i.e. ones with the ability to produce world-class examples. SA's coolest wine district, Elgin Valley, reflected these principles benefitting from higher altitude, ocean proximity, specific cloud cover sequencing, high cold units and a large diurnal range, enabling the germane grapes, Chardonnay, Syrah and more recently Pinot Noir, to show a sense of place.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 1st – 20th March 2018  
Brix at Harvest: 22.5 – 23.7

SEASON: The trend of below average winter-rainfall which begun in the winter of 2015 persisted in the winter of 2017. Thus, soils were drier and cover crops less established as the 2018 season began. However, this must be seen in the context of Elgin, one of the most reliable areas with regards rainfall and the storage thereof. Despite a reduction in rain, Elgin was still a lot better off than the rest of the South African wine areas. What did cause a reduction in our seasonal yield was wet, cool and windy weather during flowering. Chardonnay and Pinot Noir are especially sensitive to a poor flowering environment and crop loads in some of the Chardonnay were down to a measly 18 hl/ha. As an upside, the smaller berries promised high flavour intensity and good colour for the reds. During the vegetative period, there were some warm days but no damaging heatwaves and on average the growing season was cooler resulting in smaller bunch sizes and decent acidities. In what seems to have become a trend, we again experienced sporadic showers during the growing season, providing some relief in terms of water, vapour pressure deficit and temperature. There were however reports of hail damage from some parts of the valley. The cooler weather meant slower ripening, and this allowed the vines to accumulate the important secondary metabolites that are the hallmark of noble cultivars interacting with well-matched terroir.

WINEMAKING: Grapes were hand-picked in the early autumnal mornings, placed into small lug baskets and tipped directly into a press before being gently whole-bunch pressed up to a maximum of 0.6 bar or until a low juice recovery of 615 litres per ton was obtained using our new Willmes Sigma 5 press. The juice gravity-flowed directly to barrel (no pumps were used at all) without settling. The unclarified juice had no enzymes or yeast added to it and therefore underwent spontaneous fermentation until dry, with malolactic discouraged. The wine rested in barrel for 4 months prior to judicious sulphuring and a further 7 months' maturation in barrel before racking, blending and bottling.

BARREL SELECTION: A small number of artisanal coopers were selected, all from Burgundy and only French oak was chosen. Importantly, each clone and soil type was micro vinified as separate batches. Each batch used an algorithm that we have developed to ascertain which coopers work best and how many new and used barrels are utilised. Overall, the average in 2018 was 39.4% new oak; 82.2% 228 l and 17.8% 500 l.

ALCOHOL: 13.50%

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 15 982 bottles and 70 Magnums.

TASTING PROFILE: Restrained, mineral style focussed on elegance with a white fruit character, some oatmeal and some complexity gained from percipient applied wood.



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