

# 2017 Kershaw Elgin Syrah

RANGE: Clonal Selection

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Syrah made up of clones SH9c & SH22.

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

TOTAL VINEYARD PRODUCTION: 10.2 tons selected from 5 small parcels of Syrah.

**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 and Syrah and more recently Pinot Noir, to show a sense of place.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 20th – 24th March 2017  
Harvest Brix: 23.2 – 24.2

**SEASON:** Whilst 2017 experienced a cool winter to enable good vine dormancy, the rainfall was low and followed similar conditions felt in 2015 and 2016. Budbreak took place in ideal warm sunny conditions whilst flowering was a touch earlier than normal; strong blustery winds meant pollination took longer to complete. As a result, berry set was uneven leading to some smaller berries that despite a lower yield did have good concentration of flavours. Despite expecting an early harvest an unusually cool December slowed down ripening whilst some January rain during veraison helped nourish the soils and more importantly, helped the vine focus on grape ripening rather than foliage & root growth. Harvest took place under blue skies in late March. Importantly, night time temperatures were cooler than usual enabling better colour and flavour formation, retention of acidity and steady phenolic ripeness. The net result is wines with fabulous natural acidity, pure and penetrating fruit flavours and fine powdery tannins.

**WINEMAKING:** The grapes were handpicked under autumnal skies into small lug baskets and then manually sorted on a conveyor before the stems were removed. The destemmed berries fell onto a vibrating table in order to remove jacks and substandard berries before dropping uncrushed into a small 500kg conical hopper and being forklifted into open-topped fermenters. The grapes underwent a 3-day maceration before spontaneous fermentation began. A gentle pigeage program was charted and the grapes remained on skins for 20-26 days. The wine was then racked to barrel under gravity and the remaining pomace basket-pressed. Malolactic then proceeded in barrel followed by a light sulphuring and 17-month maturation. No finings were necessary, and the wine was simply racked and bottled unfiltered.

**BARREL SELECTION:** A small number of artisanal coopers were selected from Burgundy and Rhone, with only French oak chosen. Importantly, each clone and soil type are 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 2017 was 41.5% new oak; 23.6% 228 l; 69.8% 500 l, and 6.6% breathable eggs.

ALCOHOL: 13.5%.

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 9253 bottles and 33 Magnums.

**TASTING PROFILE:** Subtle, precise style built on fine tannins that educe harmony, freshness with flavours of black skinned fruit, iodine and ground white peppercorns



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