

2021 Lower Duivenhoks River Chardonnay

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Chardonnay made from Dijon clone CY95.

WINE OF ORIGIN: Lower Duivenhoks River, Western Cape, South Africa.

TOTAL VINEYARD PRODUCTION: 3.73 tons from a single vineyard block of Chardonnay.

OVERVIEW: During the year, I have the opportunity to visit a number of areas outside of Elgin. Occasionally, I come across something so fascinating that it deserves a closer look. In 2016, I discovered a small parcel of Chardonnay grapes growing on limestone soils – a rarity in the Western Cape. With limestone often touted as beneficial for Chardonnay grapes, it made sense to grasp this opportunity with both hands. The GPS Series is a testament to these special places and celebrates them.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 27th February 2021
Brix at Harvest: 23.6

SEASON: 2021 was an outstanding vintage that was cooler and later than the ten-year average. During the post-harvest period of 2020, there were reasonable water reserves in the soil and this allowed the vines to have a successful build-up of reserves as we headed into winter. Fortunately, winter rainfall was significantly higher than the previous season. Budding occurred in late August around normal and once activated, it was very even for Chardonnay. A cool early Spring with wetter conditions meant the soils remained cool, leading to a delayed growth of the immature shoots by up to three weeks. Flowering and fruit set was characterised by continuous cool conditions with frequent rain showers. Veraison occurred 2-3 weeks later than average giving a much longer hangtime than normal and harvesting began in late February but went deep into March. The wines themselves have a fabulous pH with high acidity and perfumed flavour profiles; alcohols are somewhat lower than average.

WINEMAKING: Grapes were hand-picked in the early morning, 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 Willmes Sigma 5 press. The juice gravity-flowed directly to barrel 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, 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 2021 56% was new oak, and the remainder split evenly between 1st and 2nd fill barrels.

ALCOHOL: 13.5 % **TOTAL PRODUCTION:** 2660 bottles were produced.

TASTING PROFILE: A rich but elegant entry with pithy texture and mineral acidity enhanced by rock dust and lemon rind that is filled out with ripe pear, peach halves, tinned fruit cocktail and Seville oranges with a smidgen of pineapple on the mid-palate. The limestone soil adds a savoury twist and chalky edge whilst Seville orange and lime lift the delicate back palate towards its elongated finish.



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