

2023 Kershaw Clonal Selection Elgin Chardonnay

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Chardonnay made from Dijon clones CY96, CY95, CY76, CY277 and the Entav clone CY548.

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

VINEYARD PRODUCTION: Selected from 11 small parcels of Chardonnay.

HISTORY: Founded in 2012, owner and Master of Wine Richard Kershaw established Kershaw Wines to craft clonally defined, site-expressive wines from noble cultivars capable of greatness. Based in South Africa's coolest wine district, the Elgin Valley, there is a focus on Chardonnay, Syrah, and more recently, Pinot Noir—varieties that thrive here thanks to Elgin's unique confluence of altitude, maritime influence, abundant cold units, and distinctive cloud choreography. With a sharp eye on clone and site synergy, the aim is to craft wines that clearly speak of their origin.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 10th February – 15th March 2023

Brix at Harvest: 21.9 – 23.3

SEASON: Winter rainfall was again below average, but temperatures during dormancy in 2022 were lower than the previous year, with minimums dropping below 0°C each month. Spring was cold and wet. However, daytime temperatures were higher than average, accelerating bud break and initial vine growth, even though nighttime temperatures remained lower. The weather shifted to warmer, drier conditions in December and January, accelerating vine growth and leading to earlier grape ripening. Temperatures remained moderate to cool throughout the season, with the highest temperature not exceeding 32.2°C. This helped develop complex flavours while retaining the grapes' acidity. February and March brought cooler temperatures and increased rainfall, initially raising concerns about grape quality. However, the earlier dry conditions allowed soils to absorb rainfall, reducing vine stress and supporting proper physiological ripening, particularly in Chardonnay. As a result, these varieties were harvested two weeks earlier than usual.

WINEMAKING: Grapes were hand-picked in the early autumn mornings, placed into small lug baskets and tipped directly into a press before being gently whole-bunch pressed. The juice gravity-flowed directly to barrel without settling. The unclarified juice had no enzymes or yeast added, and therefore underwent spontaneous fermentation until dry, with malolactic fermentation discouraged. The wine rested in barrel for four months before judicious sulphuring and a further seven 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 2023 was 34% new oak; 100% 228 l.

ALCOHOL: 13.13% | **RS:** 2 g/l. | **TA:** 7.7 g/l. | **pH:** 3.19 | **TOTAL PRODUCTION:** 2244 bottles

TASTING PROFILE: Mineral-driven with a nose of struck flint, sea spray, then rising to freshly squeezed lemon, lucerne flowers, and spiced pear. Restrained on the palate with a remarkably taut, high-tensile acidity that lends invigorating freshness. The dynamic tension between fruit, acid, and minerality creates an intricate and energetic wine, where the ripe lemon core interplays beautifully with delicate floral notes, Forelle pear, and an overarching salinity.

