

2019 Klein River Syrah

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Syrah made from clone SH1.

WINE OF ORIGIN: Klein River, Western Cape, South Africa.

TOTAL VINEYARD PRODUCTION: 3.345 tons from 2 vineyard blocks of Syrah - 1 trellised and 1 bush vine.

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. Twenty years ago, the first Syrah vines were planted in what is now one of the smallest wine wards in South Africa, Klein River. Traditionally used for sheep and wheat, 3 ha of virgin shale-derived Glenrosa soil was set aside for Syrah. These soils are normally the hallmark of warmer areas, but these vines nestle up against the Klein River Mountain range. The nearby Akkedis Valley provides a portal through which the cool sea breezes from the nearby Walker Bay penetrate, creating a mild meso-climate in summer. Wines made from these vines have consistently won acclaim and awards, so I did not think twice when the opportunity to make wine from these 20-year-old vines came my way. The GPS Series is a testament to these special places and celebrates them.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 1st and 5th March 2019
Brix at Harvest: 21.4 & 23.7

SEASON: In 2019, cold units that allow much-needed respite for the vines to sleep were the best for five years. Spring rainfall was less than usual, which eased disease pressure. Still, gusty, localised conditions damaged some of the young shoots and flowers but were sporadic, leaving us with lower yields on some parcels. It became hot toward the end of October. It cooled down dramatically in November. Later in December, regular rain showers and cooler conditions were more positive. The summer was generally cooler than average from January through to the end of March. The cooler weather helped the vines gradually accumulate flavour, and cooler nights helped retain acidity. This led to a delayed harvest for Syrah and some lower alcohols in bottle. The resulting wines achieved good colour and phenological ripeness, with elegant structure and optimal sugar and acidity levels.

WINEMAKING: 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 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 16-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, 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 2019 33% was new oak; 89% using 500 litre barrels and 11% in breathable eggs.

ALCOHOL: 13.5% | **RS:** 2.5 g/l | **TA:** 5.3 g/l | **pH:** 3.64. | **TOTAL PRODUCTION:** 1978 bottles.

TASTING PROFILE: Mid magenta red, the 2019 Syrah is wonderfully expressive with a lifted, almost perfumed nose of lavender, Chinese 5 spice, black plum, dried pear, white pepper and some prune. The palate is captivating with an array of flavours from garrigue and cistus flowers to dried apple rings, cinnamon, allspice, milk chocolate and even apricot halves thrown in. Underneath this plethora of fruit is a tactile coolness, perhaps menthol with a dry spice note offset by chalky fine tannins.



Kershaw



 @RKershawWines

 @kershawwines

 RKershawWines

///isolated.ear thier.mystically

 WHAT3WORDS