

2016 Lake District Cartref SH9c

RANGE: Deconstructed

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Syrah made up of clone 9c

WINE OF ORIGIN: Lake District, Elgin, South Africa

SOIL: Cartref, of granitic origin with Quartz

TOTAL VINEYARD PRODUCTION: 500 kg selected from a registered single vineyard site.

OVERVIEW: The inspiration for the Deconstructed range stems from my belief that the Elgin region boasts credentials that make it world-class. To bolster these regional credentials, I have set out to prove that Elgin has both a signature grape, as well as specific 'terroirs' / meso-climates that reflect intra-regional distinctions. To fully comprehend this, it is necessary to dig deeper into the nuances/DNA that make up our region. To elucidate this, I have decided to make 3 Syrah wines that have been selected from a specific vineyard and an individual clone. Importantly, this is an ongoing story that will unfold over the coming years.

VINTAGE: Hand-Picking Dates: 24th March 2016

Harvest Brix: 22.00

SEASON: In 2016, the preceding winter was fairly dry but cold units were exceptional (1200) with plenty of frosty mornings, allowing the vines to go into a proper dormancy. Rain did finally fall in August and September but as October began, the effect of the El Niño phenomenon (or ENSO episode) started to take effect. October was unusually warm accelerating budbreak and flowering. The fluctuating warm and cool days meant flowering was uneven, giving rise to smaller potential bunch sizes. After a cooler November, December was warm, sunny and dry enabling potential diseases to be kept at bay. A hot and dry January, meant acidity retention by the vine was challenging but after a warm start to February, the weather finally became cooler - and night time temperatures also dipped more so than average - providing the vine with some respite after a particularly torrid summer. The drier conditions meant that disease pressure was minimal, and a healthy crop was picked in late March. The thicker skins held plenty of anthocyanins but meant it was crucial to avoid over extraction. Thus, gentler punch-downs were employed, and post fermentation maceration was shorter with the press fraction matured separately from the free run juice. This resulted in deeper colours with supple, pliant tannins; although acidities were softer than average, fruit concentration was high, and the wines have a lifted black fruit flavour profile.

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 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 25 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 the Rhone, with only French oak chosen. 45% of the oak was new with the remainder split into 2nd fill barrels, 228 litres in size.

ALCOHOL: 14.05%

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 370 bottles were produced, all individually marked on the label.

TASTING PROFILE: Sourced from a single parcel in the western part of Elgin the 9c clone when planted in cooler areas is known to produce wines that are well scented, delicately balanced and savoury. They are medium in weight resonating elegance, finesse of tannin, and purity of fruit, the flavours revealing more white pepper, violet/lavender, Victoria plum and iodine. They tend to exude freshness and energy with lively acidity giving precision to the wine. The Cartref soils, a mixture of decomposed granite, pebbles and quartz, add gracefulness and heighten the fruit intensity.



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