2020 Kershaw Lake District Cartref Shale SH9c

VARIETAL INFORMATION: 100% Syrah made from clone SH9c.

WINE OF ORIGIN: The Lake District, Elgin, Western Cape, South Africa.

SOIL: Cartref.

TOTAL PRODUCTION: 300 bottles.

OVERVIEW: The inspiration for these Deconstructed Syrahs 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 signature grapes and specific 'terroirs' (meso-climates) that reflect intra-regional distinctions. To fully comprehend this, it is necessary to dig deeper into the DNA that makes up our region. To elucidate this, I have decided to make these Syrah wines that have each 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: 3rd April 2020.
Brix at Harvest: 23

SEASON: The winter preceding the 2020 vintage was cooler than average, helping leaf fall occur later and enabling a proper accumulation of nutrient reserves. Budburst and initial growth were very even, partly due to the milder-than-usual September weather. As November turned to December, there were constant blustery conditions with steady drizzle, showers and cool weather conditions. These conditions controlled the vigour and positively affected the restriction of vegetative growth and berry size. High soil moisture and regular light rain showers – coupled with relatively cool day and night temperatures during January and February - delayed the ripening process significantly. When the Government announced the nationwide lockdown on 26 March 2020, we were still in the middle of the harvest and, after a few days of intense negotiations, were able to finish the season successfully.

WINEMAKING: The grapes were handpicked and manually sorted on a conveyor before the stems were removed. The destemmed berries were dropped uncrushed into small 500kg open-topped fermenters. The grapes underwent a 3-day maceration before spontaneous fermentation began. A gentle delestage program was charted, and the grapes remained on skins for up to 15 days. The wine was then racked to barrel under gravity and the remaining pomace basket pressed. Malolactic proceeded in barrel followed by a light sulphuring after which the wine was racked off malolactic lees and returned to clean barrels for an 11-month maturation. No fining is usually necessary, and the wine was racked and lightly filtered before bottling.

BARREL SELECTION: A small number of artisanal coopers were selected, all from Burgundy and the Rhone, with only French oak chosen. For the Deconstructed Syrah we used 70% new oak.

ALCOHOL: 13.84% RS: 2.4 g/l TA: 4.6 g/l pH: 3.65

TASTING PROFILE: The intense aromas display black pepper, dark berries, roast meat, hung game, star anise and some gentle feral characters. Medium to full-bodied, the Cartref SH9c radiates breed and elegance. The plush textured mid-palate is coated with fleshy blackberry, mocha, clove-studded oranges, ground black pepper, and wafts of sandalwood, all supported by a firm acid that provides structure. The finish signs off with gentle spices and a surprisingly delicate farewell. The tannins are dense and finely woven.

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