DE WETSHOF ESTATE BON VALLON CHARDONNAY 2022

AN INTRODUCTION TO DE WETSHOF ESTATE

De Wetshof is a third generation wine estate in South Africa's Robertson Valley, where wine has been made for over 150 years. Here Danie de Wet, proprietor and cellarmaster, is assisted by sons and co-owners Johann (viticulture and marketing) and Peter (winemaker). De Wetshof Estate is a pioneer of noble white wines in South Africa and has also introduced superior red cultivars to the Robertson Wine Valley.

On De Wetshof a firm belief prevails, namely that one cannot know where you are going unless you know where you have come from. This is why the history of De Wetshof's vineyards plays a profound role in determining present and future wine quality. Since the early 1970's meticulous records have been kept on each vineyard as to the plants' reaction to soil-types, irrigation and the vagaries of climate, as well as their development and progress over the years. Each vineyard is thus vinified separately during the wine-making process, the wine-makers having a clear understanding of what the fruit of each vineyard's labour is going to deliver during a specific year.

This commitment to discovering and determining the various terrains on De Wetshof, as well as an absolute focus on site-specific vineyard management and winemaking, has been an integral part of the De Wetshof ethos from the outset and remains a vital and non-negotiable aspect of all the Estate's wines.

VINIFICATION

The grapes are picked in the coolness of morning, and the emphasis is on capturing the natural complexities of the Chardonnay grape immediately for the making of this unwooded wine. Once de-stemming, pressing and overnight settling are complete, the juice is racked-off from the sediment and pumped into stainless steel tanks for the alcohol fermentation. After fermentation the wine is left on the less under controlled temperatures. Weekly stirring of the lees ensures maximum flavours are released into the wine until ready for bottling.

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Soils rich in limestone and broken mountain rock on De Wetshof's site-specific vineyards allow this wine to emit optimum varietal expression. An unwooded wine, Bon Vallon has a brisk and clean freshness leading into a wide spectrum of classic flavours including citrus, wild flowers and grilled nuts, with a nuanced minerality on the aftertaste. The succulent palate structure makes this an ideal food wine, superb with oysters, cream based pasta dishes, light curries as well as roast pork and veal dishes.

ORIGIN

Vineyard blocks 19B, 21 and Block 40. Wine of Origin Robertson, De Wetshof Estate.

CLIMATE

The Robertson Valley is characterised by cold winters and sunny summers, with an average annual rainfall of 350 - 400mm. In summer a fresh southerly breeze has a cooling effect on the vineyards, allowing the grapes to ripen evenly and in perfect balance. Nights are chilly and during summer months a mist often shrouds the vineyards until late morning. The dry climate and bracing breeze keep pests to a minimum, resulting in sparse spraying programmes.

IRRIGATION

Controlled computerised irrigation systems including the monitoring of soil moisture content ensure the vines are given exactly the right amount of water at the right time to produce grapes of optimum ripeness and developed flavours.

SOILS

Rocky, mountain gravel soil with an abundance of free limestone and complemented with a slight clay component assisting in the water hold capacity of the soil. The high pH of the De Wetshof soils ensures ideal vineyard conditions for the growing of Chardonnay, allowing true varietal expression.

VINEYARD INFORMATION

Age of the vines	10-20 years
Vines per hectare	4000 and some sections 4500
Rootstock	Richter 99 and Richter 110
Planting row	2,4m x 1m and 1,83m x 1,2m
Soil pH	7,2 – 8,2
Trellising style	6 Wire fence system cordon with spur pruning.
Yield	6 – 8 tons per hectare
Barrel maturation	None
Maturation potential	3 - 5 years

CHEMICAL ANALYSIS

Cultivar	100% Chardonnay
Vintage	2022
Alcohol	13.34%
Total Acidity	6.3 g/l
pH	3.47
Sugar	1.5 g/l
SO_2	37/100