

BEAU
CONSTANTIA

CECILY 2022

100% VIOGNIER

This year

by Winemaker Megan van der Merwe

Though the preceding winter was warmer than usual, it still provided sufficient cold units and rainfall to fill soil reserves. August temperatures were far cooler than the last five seasons and we entered Spring on the back of an intense cold front. These wet, cold soil conditions led to bud break being around 10 days late. Further supported by short internodal lengths, the initial growth throughout September was slow. A warmer October accelerated growth and by the time of flowering, reproductive growth was only around 5 days behind. Both October and November brought bucketloads of scattered rain (60mm each) and hail, leading to increased vegetative growth, and thus increased suckering to allow for air flow in the bunch zone. It also meant a strenuous management plan for the vineyard floor in terms of eradicating competing weeds.

Early-flowering varieties managed to escape the wrath of November's gale force winds, but later flowering varieties struggled with berry set. By December Downey mildew had caused industry-wide panic, which meant spraying on the weekly to remain safe. Come *veraison* we experienced rolling heatwaves with specific severity for the period 21-23 January. Our Oceanic mesoclimate managed to provide us with a slight buffering capacity, but it was still far warmer than for that same period in prior years. We also experienced strangely inconsistent cold spells breaking the various heat-cycles - new to our environment. 2022 was challenging, but challenges are what make a vintage unique, and overcoming them is what makes a vintage meaningful.

The wine

Our Viognier is grown on a combination of terrains on our Estate and the 2022 fruit came in over 3 small pickings between 25 February and 8 March as the different viticultural pockets managed to perfectly ripen their fruit. Achieving balance in Viognier is a tough task, but our cool climate allows for a lengthened ripening period, preserving the fruit's acidity whilst developing those succulent, mouth-coating phenolics and gobsmacking concentration in fruit.

Bunches were picked just after sunrise, cooled overnight and whole bunch pressed the following morning. Seeds were brown and crunchy, skins slightly sun kissed and their contents showing great acidity and concentration in fruit. Sulphur and dry ice were both omitted at processing in an attempt to hyper oxidise the juice. It allows for us to drop out those bitter phenols that are responsible for the more astringent versions of this varietal expression. Juice settled over 2 days before being racked to various vessels for fermentation. We believe that neutral vessels do well in preserving our vineyards' unique characteristics, and so 59% of the blend fermented and matured in older 225L French oak barrels, whilst 24% spent its time in a concrete egg and only 17% of the blend spent time in new French oak. Once fermentation was complete, the wine matured on the gross fermentation lees for 8 months prior to being bottled. At first the nose is shy and hints of orange blossom, jasmine flower and mascarpone. These subtle notes linger until a convincing swirl releases unmistakable white peach and candied mandarin.



W.O.	ALC	TA	VA	RS	pH
Constantia	13.56 % VOL	5.40 g/l	0.56 g/l	3.4 g/l	3.65

Viognier - a rare grape variety that miraculously manages to capture our abundant sunshine in its perfumed fruit and flavours. Named for the Du Preez family matriarch, this elegant, balanced wine is both graceful and vibrant, a fitting tribute to Cecily.

WINE OF SOUTH AFRICA

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