

BEAU
CONSTANTIA

PIERRE 2022

93% SAUVIGNON BLANC, 7% SEMILLON

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

Growing these vines and ultimately preserving their fruit in liquid form is a humbling experience. We tirelessly tend to these vines that daringly grow on incredibly steep NE-facing slopes stretching from 280m- up to 360m above sea level, where the vines are absolutely battered by the famous Cape winds. PIERRE is the offspring of 5 vineyard blocks that all head straight to the blend, so not only is there nowhere to hide in terms of winemaking, but you are left with a true mouthful of place.

The first picking came from a rocky terrain planted to clone SB10 on 24 February. The grapes were destemmed and crushed into a small cuve and cold-soaked on the skins for 3 days before allowing temperatures to climb, enabling fermentation on the skins. Fermenting skins were pressed to barrel after 7 days and this portion made up 34% of the blend. The latter 66% came in 3 weeks later and comprised of perfectly pink Sémillon GD1 and SB clones 10 and -11 showing intense flavour concentration. After a 16 hour skin-soak berries were pressed to a clay amphora and old French oak barrel where the two varieties co-fermented. All batches matured on their gross lees for 8 months prior to being bottled. If there is one wine in our range that shows our close proximity to the cold Atlantic Ocean, it is PIERRE with its profound minerality that adds flesh to the high-altitude Sauvignon Blanc's nervy acidity and fine tannin structure derived from skin contact fermentation and lees maturation. We like to enjoy this melting pot of blackcurrant, ripe granadilla and buchu with some moreish Gua Bao!



W.O.	ALC	TA	VA	RS	pH
Constantia	13.50 % VOL	6.20 g/l	0.47 g/l	2.20 g/l	3.43

A classic cool climate Sauvignon blanc made from grapes grown at high altitude on incredibly steep NE-facing slopes. These low-yielding, windswept vines are determined to survive and produce fruit of incredible flavor concentration.

WINE OF SOUTH AFRICA

WWW.BEAUCONSTANTIA.COM