



KARIN 2022

100% CABERNET FRANC

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

We picked 1.4 tons of fruit from our NE-facing slopes on 16 March, nearly 2 weeks after our 2021 picking, and pressed them whole-bunch in a gentle 3-hour *champenoise* cycle to minimize extraction of colour and bitter phenols from the skins. Berries were far smaller than they were the prior year and bunches less compact. Leaves were also stripped from the morning-sun side of the canopy just after fruit set in order to metabolize gnarly green flavours in the vineyard before picking. This was done to ensure less interference in the cellar during the preservation of the fruit. Once pressed, the juice settled overnight before being inoculated with a yeast strain that expresses volatile thiol-type varietal aromas.

At first the must fermented in tank under controlled conditions at a maximum temperature of 19 degrees Celsius before being barreled down to one 600L- and one 225L older French oak barrel in the last third of its fermentation journey. Once fermentation was complete, the wine remained on the gross lees for 7 months before being bottled. Pale beyond belief, this wine's colour is hard to define, but lands on the spectrum somewhere around onion skin. The nose, at first subtle, is an indication of just how serious an offering this is. As one swirls, struck match and gun flint gradually give way to aromas of capsicum, blood orange and grapefruit. This wine is extremely introverted and will open up beautifully given some air. By minimizing time on the skins and extending time in barrel, this wine presents a surprisingly creamy texture and a zippy citrus acidity with a saline edge that may just be related to our close proximity to the sea. On the finish, an undeniable oyster shell minerality.



W.O.	ALC	TA	VA	RS	pH
Constantia	14.53 % VOL	5.60 g/l	0.45 g/l	2.20 g/l	3.49

This wine has been handcrafted as a tribute to Karin, a woman equally as elegant and stylish as this restraint expression of the complex variety Cabernet Franc.

WINE OF SOUTH AFRICA

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