

BEAU  
CONSTANTIA

# KARIN

2023

100% CABERNET FRANC

## This year

by Winemaker Megan van der Merwe

Going into the 2023 season on the back of a slightly “drier” winter and warmer spring, bud break at Beau occurred around 12 days early. There was no real disease pressure during Spring through early summer and our first flower hoods detached from around 24 October, luckily just after receiving 34mm of rain. Though we were grateful to receive some rain right before flowering, this rain combined with additional heat during October led to increased vegetative growth resulting in increased humidity within the canopy – not ideal for the flowering microclimate. It meant a season of increased suckering to allow for air movement and better spray penetration in the bunch zone.

Bunches set more loosely than in prior years, and though berry size remained consistent, bunches were lighter. Mid-December rains led to soil reserves being filled and us seeing another spike in vegetative growth. The increased water and heat also pointed towards more strenuous management of weeds on the vineyard floor, which we left to try and counteract the strong vegetative growth and resultant slower reproductive growth in the vineyard. It was dry from late December through January, with a welcome 15mm of rain on the 25th just to allow for a little bit of extra hang time during an otherwise early season. February showed textbook conditions and we were very happy with this crop showing beautiful phenolic ripeness at lower sugar levels and higher than average acid concentrations.

## The wine

The 2023 KARIN is by far the most reserved version of this wine produced to date. Pale beyond belief, it strikes the colour wheel at onion skin. We picked the fruit on 21 February, two weeks earlier than the year before. The picking followed a stormy night that gave us 38mm of rain, and we thought it well to get them off before our carefully farmed flavour diluted. The small, loosely set bunches were cooled overnight and whole-bunch pressed in a gentle 3-hour *Champenoise* cycle to minimise extraction from the skins. The must settled in contact with activated carbon overnight, and was racked and inoculated with a yeast strain that expresses volatile thiol-type varietal aromas the morning thereafter. Fermentation was kept low and slow, and the final wine then spent 5 months on the gross lees before a light fining and filtration en route to bottle.

The nose, at first subtle, needs a convincing swirl to unwind into aromas of chamomile and pomegranate, which quickly give way to some more complex crushed cinnamon and mustard seeds. On entry to the palate, a refreshing, briny pickle of daikon radish provides an earthy undertone to a zesty mouthfeel. By minimising time on the skins and extending time on the lees, this delicate wine presents a zippy citrus acidity and an angular structure with a surprisingly creamy texture. On the finish - a saline edge of oyster shell minerality that can only be related to our close proximity to the sea. Enjoy with a piping hot focaccia topped with goats cheese, parma ham and fresh rocket.

W.O.

ALC

TA

VA

RS

pH

Constantia

13.20 % VOL

5.8 g/l

0.34 g/l

1.50 g/l

3.53

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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