

QUARTER: APRIL - JUNE 2024

SPECIAL DISCOVERIES (12 bottles) R1880.00

KRUGER FAMILY Chardonnay Sans Chêne 2020

R173 per bottle

Johan Kruger grew up on Sterhius in Stellenbosch, but today enjoys the freedom of selecting grape parcels he wants. Partnering with Johan Van Zyl from the farm Heidedal in the high mountains of the Piekenierskloof Valley, he puts much effort into this vineyard and winemaking. The grapes are grown on 700m alt. on decomposed granite soils, and were whole bunch pressed, straight to stainless steel (60 %) and concrete egg (40%) with no additions – natural fermentation proceeded and the wine has evolved perfectly without the need of oak to bolster it. It has a lovely citrus aroma, with a touch of new hay and little red apples. Medium bodied with super acidity to balance and a long finish. Serve with ham and mushroom quiche or chicken fillets baked in the oven with a creamy sauce.

ROODEKRANTZ 1983 Chenin Blanc 2022

R147 per bottle

The owners' enduring love for vineyards remained the primary drive, propelling an ongoing quest to discover unique vineyards that communicate the stories of their site and soil. They work with certified old vineyards. This Chenin comes off dry-land old (1983) bush vines grown on decomposed granite soils enriched with organic material. It has an aromatic nose filled with tropical and stone fruits, mainly peach, pineapple, and ripe citrus. These flavours are in perfect balance with the acidity and subtle oak component. Ripe and fresh, with a zesty citrus lift on the finish. The subtle richness will stand up to creamy pasta dishes, while the ripe tropical fruit characters will pair well with mild curries or spicy Asian cuisine.

VONDELING Sauvignon Blanc 2023

R117 per bottle

Winemaker Matthew Copeland has been in charge since 2007, working with their own organically grown grapes in the Paardeberg. The grapes used to make this wine come from old vineyards planted in 1981. Yields are rarely above 7t/ha and therefore naturally produce wines of structure and superior concentration. The soils consist of deep, well-weathered granite with moderate amounts of clay and iron. Such soils elevate the aromatics and promote finesse in the wine. It displays an aromatic kaleidoscope, rich with peach, white pear, passion fruit and lime. These aromas prevail on the palate with added guava and pineapple. The roundness is balanced by a steely mineral zest and enjoyable long finish. Enjoy chilled with fresh sourdough bread and soft cheeses or fresh fish.

ASARA Cape Fusion Red 2017

R131 per bottle

This 180ha farm has 102ha of grapes, and is owned by Marcus Rahmann. Currently undergoing a replanting process, there are some very good buys in the range. This red blend comprises Shiraz, Pinotage and Malbec, harvested in the brilliant vintage of 2017. These three cultivars create a harmonious blend with complex layers of spice, mocha and dark berries. The palate is full and round with red & black berries, violet and a hint of chocolate. It's an unashamedly anytime wine – drink now until 2028.

THOKOZANI Cabernet Franc 2022

R186 per bottle

A superb example of Cabernet Franc from Diemersfontein Estate in Wellington. (2021 vintage was a 5* wine). It has a medium-depth ruby red colour. The approach shows a burst of red fruit, cassis and plum, with a subtle herbaceous note. The round mouthfeel with grippy, yet elegant tannin, has a weighted indulgence across all aspects of the palate. A delicate red bell pepper offers balance to the richer characteristics of the wine, ensuring a lingering aftertaste with hints of fennel. Next time you're cooking lamb on the coals, serve this wine!

DIEMERSFONTEIN Shiraz 2022

R186 per bottle

Wellington's Diemersfontein, owned by David & Sue Sonnenberg, has gone from strength to strength, but slipped under our radar for a while. What a perfect Shiraz this is! Vibrant crimson-red, generous aroma, loads of black cherry and a hint of black pepper. Medium bodied, smooth, plush with good acidity and a hint of charcoal. Versatile for pairing with any meat dish, even with spices incorporated. Drink now – 2028.

SMALL PARCELS (6 bottles) R1768.00

DE KLEINE WIJN KO-OP, KREATUUR Nagrivexandri White 2023

R180 per bottle

De Kleine Wijn Koöp is at the helm of winemaker Wynand Grobler and his wife, Anya. The Groblers regard the 'cooperative' as a two-man family business and run the business from a small cellar and a dedicated team in the heart of Paarl. Wynand does not care for corporate structures - his goal is to be personally involved in the winemaking process. He produces only small quantities of wine with excellent grapes, and from some mysterious vineyards all over the winelands. This wine with the strange name is a blend of 45% Grenache blanc, 32% Grenache Gris, 17% Verdelho, 6% Muscat d' Alexandrie. It is floral, pretty, very different (no Chenin for a change), balanced and dry with perfect lift. Pair it with your next lightly flavoured fish dish.

CELESTINA Agulhas White 2023

R329 per bottle

In 2021 I took the plunge and built my own small winery on my 3.5Ha wine farm in Baardskeedersbos, close to Elim. In 2023, with help from consultant winemaker Jean Daneel, I made my own wine, with the great Chateau Lynch-Bages Blanc as my benchmark. It is fruity, with excellent acid balance. It displays the typical mineral characteristic, coupled with raciness and a subtle hint of saltiness. The Sauvignon shines in the blend, whilst the Semillon adds palate-weight. Crushed grapes were pressed in a basket press and settled overnight. Fermented and matured for nine months in clay amphora and seasoned oak. I am very proud of how it has turned out. Serve with subtly flavoured, pork, chicken or fish. Best in six months' time. Limited number of 1350 bottles produced.

THORNE & DAUGHTERS Menagerie Chardonnay 2021

R293 per bottle

John Seccombe has created a great name for his eclectic range of wines, especially his Rocking Horse white blend. In his travels to vineyards around the Cape, he is offered fruit from tiny vineyard parcels which were not on his shopping list! Some are too good to refuse, and these go into his Menagerie range. These grapes are from Ceres Plateau and Piekenierskloof. This one shows notes of orange blossom and papaya & spanspek. Tangy and dry.

LA VIERGE Private Cellar Noir 2019

R248 per bottle

A pioneer of cool climate winegrowing in the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley, La Vierge is at the gateway to the higher-lying section of the valley. Superb Pinots and Chardonnays are crafted here by winemaker Christo Kotze. This Pinot Noir shows cool climate poise and elegance with an earthy and bright fruit character. This vintage expresses the typical earthy and savoury aroma of this fine Burgundy variety and is backed by a red fruit character. A greater selection clones and blocks during picking and older elements in the blend shows a darker and more textured style in bottle from previous vintages. Enjoy it with mushroom risotto, roast game, cream-based pasta and hard cheese platters.

TORERO Suit of Lights Carignan 2022

R380 per bottle

A collaboration of Fernando Rueda, Ian Naude and Angus Paul, the name echoing Fernando's Spanish roots. This Wellington vineyard located on Welgegund is home to mature bush-vines planted on ancient decomposed granite and clay soils, largely composed of quartz and feldspar. An individual expression of Carignan that offers spicy, flinty raw fruitiness over dried kelp, salty cassis, sour black plum and exotic complex layers of graphite minerality. It is penetrating and inky with more sour black plum, spiced cranberry and a linear mouthfeel. Granular tannins coat the mouth, rendering it a great match for chargrilled meats on the braai or rich game casseroles.

MIGLIARINA Equilibrium Syrah-Cabernet Sauvignon 2020

R338 per bottle

Carsten Migliarina is a Somerset West based internationally experienced sommelier, turned winemaker. Migliarina Wines was founded in 2002 when he produced his first wine under his own label. Starting very small, the first production consisted of a Sauvignon Blanc and a Shiraz, both from Franschoek. The Shiraz was matured in a friends garage. "Often at tastings I am asked "where are you" in the context of where my estate is, my reply "right in front of you". I do not own a wine farm, I am not unhappy about this as it allows me the freedom to source the best grapes from the best vineyards." His wines are crafted to represent the authenticity of the grape varieties and show the true flavours of the grape, thus he avoids fining, filtration and cold stabilisation. You will really enjoy this elegant blend, of which only 1430 bottles were produced.

RARE REDS (6 bottles) R 2478.00

STONY BROOK Ghost Gum Cabernet Sauvignon 2020

R413 per bottle

The McNaught family fell in love with Franschoek in the late 1980s, when Nigel and Joy McNaught decided to purchase a piece of land and begin their journey in to wine. The focus from the beginning was on crafting premium-quality wines that reflected the area and the styles of wine that excited them. With a strong focus on Cabernet Sauvignon, Semillon and Chardonnay, the McNaught family replanted the entire fruit farm to vines and built a small cellar in which to produce the first wines under the Stony Brook label. In 2011, the owners were joined by their son, Craig McNaught, who took over the reigns as winemaker.

The 2020 vintage was, for certain grape varieties, a great one in Franschoek. Cabernet Sauvignon was luminary for Stony Brook, with our vineyards producing small, intensely concentrated berries. The bunches were harvested by hand at full ripeness, before being hand-sorted and cold macerated for 4 days. The individual berries were fermented in stainless steel, receiving four pumpovers a day. After pressing, the wine was transferred into 80% new French oak barriques, where spontaneous malolactic fermentation and a further thirty months of maturation took place.

Generous amounts of brooding, dark berry fruit give way to secondary aromatics of cedar and cigarbox. The palate is surprisingly full and plush, with intense purity of fruit. A Cabernet filled with detail and precision that eases into a sustained finish of bright acidity and savoury tannins. Age for up to eighteen years from vintage.

SIDE NOTE: The 2020 vintage of the Ghost Gum Red stands out for another reason, our Cabernet Sauvignon grapes were harvested two days before the first hard lockdown due to COVID, and since none of our team lived on the farm at that stage except Craig, it left him man alone to continue all the pumpovers, fermentations, pressings and rackings to barrel completely unaided. Quite a task, but Craig's undivided attention has produced a very fine wine and one of his favourite vintages of Ghost Gum Red to date.

Platter Rating: 94 points/4.5 stars

ANALYSIS Alcohol: 14.9 % Sugar: 2.4 g/l Acidity: 5.7 g/l pH: 3.64