

Project Z Riesling Verdelho

2020 3x75cl

Winemaker Notes

Chiseled and taut, mellowing over time to reveal a generous palate laden with typical Riesling aromas of honeysuckle, pear and lime zest.

Vineyard

The grapes for this unusual blend were sourced from Durbanville and Elgin in the case of the Riesling and Koekenaap for the Verdelho. The Verdelho grows very close to the Atlantic Ocean on the West Coast of South Africa and has natural high acidity and a low pH.

Winemaking

The Riesling was harvested early morning and fermented in stainless-steel tanks before maturation in an amphora as well as a component in older French barrels. The Verdelho had a more interesting journey - harvested and pressed at a custom crush facility on the West Coast and then transported on the back of a bakkie to be fermented and matured in an amphora in Stellenbosch.

Vintage

After four consecutive dry winter seasons (2015-2018) the excellent rainfall in 2019 did manage to offer some relief. The effect of additional water could be seen immediately in the vineyards and we had a particularly good growing season. The crop returned to an almost normal level, and the good growing conditions and vine health set the scene and created expectations for an outstanding harvest. The better rainfall over the winter period compared to the preceding seasons had a very positive influence on the harvest but on the downside we had rather moderate winter temperatures which did lead to some uneven bud-break in the early season, and a much earlier start to the growing season than normal. The moderate winter was fortunately followed by a relative cool spring which allowed the growing pattern to even out a bit even though the growing season remained earlier than normal. Due to the good growing conditions the vines grew a bit more vigorously which meant our viticulture team really had to pay careful attention to the canopy management practices making sure the fruit stays healthy and ensure good even ripening. The harvest itself started early which was expected but it was also a quite compressed harvest that saw several red varieties, especially Cabernet Sauvignon, ripening much earlier than normal. The first part of the harvest was relatively cool and ideal for harvesting the white cultivars at optimal ripeness yet retaining fresh acidity, but the latter half of the growing season was reasonably warm with only a few heat spikes and no major heat waves. This coupled with a few light rainfall events allowed for good even ripening albeit a little earlier than anticipated. We are very happy with the natural balance and healthy acidities we saw in the grapes this year. Once again, our Chenin blanc looks very promising and the red wines show great fruit purity and concentration.

Food match

Grilled and Roasted White Meats

Fishcakes with herb & garlic sauce



Grapes

75% Riesling
25% Verdelho

Region/Appellation

Western Cape

Alcohol by volume

13.00%

Residual Sugar

3.2 g/l

pH

3.31

Total Acidity

7.1 g/l

Drinking Window

2024 - 2032

Tasting Guide

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Dry Medium Sweet

Tasting note printed

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