



Stark-Condé

2014 Cabernet Sauvignon – Stellenbosch



Varietal: 85% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petit Verdot, 4% Malbec, 3% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc

Clone: CS46C, CS163C, CS27A, 10C, 1C,

Rootstock: Richter 110, 99

Fruit source: from 4 different vineyard blocks all from our own Oude Nektar farm in Jonkershoek, Stellenbosch

Yield: 6.5 tons/hectare

Total production: 5066 (4.5l) cases

°F at harvest: 76-78°

Age of vines: cabernet 13-24 years at harvest; merlot and cab franc 14 years; petit verdot 11 years

Trellis: 5-wire vsp

Irrigation: supplemental drip irrigation

Vineyard elevation: 656-1017 ft

Slope: South East and North West

Alcohol: 14.47%

Total Acid: 6.0

Residual sugar: 1.9

Total extract: 30.0 g/l

Details of vinification and oaking:

The grapes for this wine are from 4 different cabernet vineyards and our best merlot, malbec, cabernet franc and petit verdot vineyards, all at a mix of different elevations. Although all are on the decomposed granite soils typical of the hillsides in Jonkershoek, the soil textures vary quite a lot and that, together with the differences in elevations and clones, gives a variety of different flavour profiles to the grapes. The merlot and cabernet franc grapes were picked in late February, the malbec early March, and the cabernet sauvignon grapes and the Petit Verdot were harvested in mid-March. The grapes were picked into small lug boxes and cooled overnight to about 57°F before being hand-sorted and crushed into small open-top fermentation vats. After being cold-soaked for a couple of days, the musts were inoculated with commercial yeasts. A range of yeast was used, several domestic and an imported Bordeaux yeast. About 15% also underwent fermentation with the natural yeasts. The fermentations were hand punched-down every 4 hours for the first half of fermentation and every 6-8 hours until dry. At dryness, the wine was basket-pressed and racked to barrel for malo-lactic fermentation and barrel maturation. Only 300l French oak was used, of which about 30% were new. Bottled with a light filtration after 20 months barrel maturation.

Winemaker's comment:

We got very lucky in 2014. We were waiting for just the right moment to pick some of our best Cabernet blocks and watching the weather obsessively. Late on a Friday afternoon the following week's forecast changed with a small amount of rain predicted for that Monday and Tuesday. After a lot of hand-wringing and no small amount of arguing with staff, we decided to organize a picking team for the weekend rather than take a chance. We finished picking early on the Sunday afternoon, just as rains started. It turned out to be 3 days of heavy rain. The 2014s have shown well since early in their maturation: a soft, dark-fruited vintage that should have a lot of consumer appeal.