



Stark-Condé
Petite Sirah
Stellenbosch
2015



This is a unique variety that has only recently been planted in South Africa. There may only be three of us making varietal bottlings, but I think we will see more in the future as it seems well-suited to South African conditions. The combination of excellent acidity and robust tannin should make for great maturation potential.

*Varietal: 85% Petite Sirah, 8% Syrah, 7% Merlot
Rootstock: 101-14
Fruit source: from our own Oude Nektar farm in Jonkershoek Valley
Yield: 8 tons/hectare
°B at harvest: 24-25°
Alcohol: 14.5%
Total Acid: 5.0
Residual sugar: 3.2
Total extract: 30.6 g/l
Age of vines: 9 years
Trellis: 5-wire vsp
Irrigation: drip irrigation
Vineyard elevation: 200m*

*Winemaker's comment:
Petite Sirah is known for its intense colour and flavour as well as tannin. It seems to ripen well in Stellenbosch conditions with excellent natural acidity and relatively low pH. Because it has a lot of tannin, the wines need soft handling in the cellar and also fairly oxidative handling when young. The 2015 was a very dry year year, resulting in very rich, soft wines. Many winemakers consider it to be one of the best vintages of the past 20 years. Because of the low pH and firm tannin that is inherent in this variety, the wines should age well with careful cellaring. When young they can greatly benefit from a decanting.*

Total production: 4880 bottles

This is from a small, half-hectare block at the far end of "Jan Lui's Field" near the entrance to the farm. Most of the field is a darker, richer, sandier soil and is planted for our Field Blend White, but in the far corner, there is a small section of entirely decomposed granite – soils ideal for full-bodied reds.

Details of vinification and oaking:

The grapes were harvested in early-March into small lug boxes and then cooled overnight before de-stemming and crushing into open fermentation tanks. The must was gently hand-punched down 2-3 times a day until dryness and then pressed and racked to small oak for 22 months maturation. A range of oak was used, 25% new, mainly French, but about 10% American oak. We blended in a small amount of both Syrah (8%) and Cabernet Franc (6%) to the wine to soften the tannin and add more complexity. The wine was bottled with no fining and just a light polishing filtration.