



Stark-Condé *Petite Sirah* Stellenbosch 2019



This is a unique variety that has only recently been planted in South Africa. There may only be a handful 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: 100% Petite Sirah
Rootstock: 101-14
Fruit source: from our own Oude Nektar farm in Jonkershoek Valley
Yield: 8 tons/hectare
°B at harvest: 24-25°
Alcohol: 14.0%
Total Acid: 6.0
Residual sugar: 2.1
Total extract: 26.0 g/l
Age of vines: 13 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 2019 was the fifth year of our ongoing drought, but paradoxically it was not a particularly warm growing season with no really severe heat spikes. The yields were extremely low with good fruit quality. 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.

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 decomposed granite – ideal soils 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. We did very gentle pump overs 2 times a day and then pressed at 5°B and finished the wine off the skins to minimise the extraction of harsher tannins. Just before dryness, it was pressed and finished off in small oak. A range of oak was used, 15% new, mainly French, but also about 10% American oak. 20 months barrel maturation with multiple rackings in the first year to help soften the wines. The wine was bottled with no fining and without filtration. This vineyard is organic-in-conversion.

*This wine is vegan friendly.
Total production: 1,534 bottles*