



IT'S REALLY ALL ABOUT THE VINEYARDS

Circle of Life celebrates farming in harmony with nature, telling a story of preserving and regenerating biodiversity, which we feel helps grow healthier and more characterful grapes.

In 2008 Waterkloof became one of The Western Cape Wineland's first WWF (World Wildlife Fund) Conservation Champions. Half of the property is now dedicated to preserving the diverse, indigenous but threatened plant-life that make up one of Earth's five major Floristic Regions. Of course, it is not only the flora that we help preserve and regenerate on Waterkloof, but also the inextricably connected fauna that play their part in any thriving eco-system, alongside our vines, the soil in which they stand and let's not forget ourselves, the custodians who farm this land.

Since receiving WWF Conservation Champion status, five of our neighbours have followed suit, benefitting this winegrowing hillside still further. The Schapenberg is now the ideal canvas of vineyards upon which to craft this intricately woven tapestry of a blend we call Circle of Life.

A film to find out more about Biodiversity on Waterkloof -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJGHOa15Yk>

A GENTLE HAND

We mainly rely on tasting to determine the optimum flavour development of the grapes. Bunches are hand-picked, into small picking crates, early in the mornings, when they are still cool, which helps to preserve the flavours. Extracting juice from the grapes is achieved through whole-bunch pressing in our modern basket press. This is the most delicate way to extract the juice. No additions of enzymes or settling agents were made to the juice.

AND A FEW PRAYERS TO MOTHER NATURE – 2021/2022 GROWING SEASON

A cool season with moderate weather conditions during the 2022 harvest. This gave the vine the opportunity to reach full phenolic ripeness and develop complex flavours.

The current harvest quality is dependent on the previous Winter conditions. The 2021 Winter started early and saw proper leaf fall during the month of May. The rest of the Winter was ideal and cold but we still did not have enough rain on the farm.

On the Waterkloof farm we decide to focus on a minimum tilling approach to try and build up the natural carbon percentage in the soil. Christiaan, our farm manager, started putting chipped plant cuttings down in between the vines going 30 to 40 cm high. Over this he would spray earth worm teas which will break the plant material down into a carbon source.

The legume and wild oats cover crop will only be rolled flat- only cleaning in between the vines with the aim of preserving the carbon in the soil and increasing the water holding capacity.

Due to a cold Spring budding was delayed by 2 weeks on average. Once flowering started the vine caught up and was only about 5 days later than the average year.

Luckily during flowering, we did not see strong winds and had an even berry set in the area. From December on the vine's growth was accelerated by the warmer growing conditions. We had a few heat peaks in December and in January.

As far as we remember this was one of the longest harvests! We started getting into full swing from around the second week of February and received our last grapes in on the 23rd of March. The quality looks good- we saw little rot and reached proper phenolic ripeness at lower sugar levels leading to fresher wines with slightly lower alcohols.

NADIA LANGENEGGER'S TASTING NOTE

An intriguing and very well-balanced wine. The nose shows notes of citrus, green apple, pear and a bit of honey. The palate is fine with beautiful acidity as well as length. Definitely a wine that will match numerous dishes but I can see myself enjoying this with a simple scallop dish- with a touch or more of butter.

THE NUMBERS (19 400 BOTTLES PRODUCED)

Alc: 14 %

TA: 5.7

pH: 3.38

RS: 2.3