

## CIRCUMSTANCE

### SYRAH 2021

---



#### **IT'S REALLY ALL ABOUT THE VINEYARDS**

Syrah is the red wine variety that rules the Northern Rhône Valley. There are numerous myths associated with the origin of Syrah, which all add a touch of romance to the grape and today it ranks as the 6<sup>th</sup> most planted grape variety in the world. It is extremely versatile; adapts well to a wide range of regions, and expresses a true sense of terroir.

The block used for our Circumstance Syrah is planted on the south-facing slopes of the Schapenberg at an altitude of between 240 to 260 metres above sea level and a mere 4kms from the Atlantic Ocean. Strong south-easterly winds help control growth and crop yield. Our Syrah vines flourish in granite soils, just as they do in most of the Northern Rhône appellations. Production was approximately 2.5 tons/ha.

At Waterkloof we pride ourselves in not spraying any chemical herbicides or pesticides in our vineyards. We produce our own compost and other preparations, which we then apply by using our work-horses, as opposed to heavy tractors. These practices ensure loose soil with more life, where the vines can spread their roots as they please; taking up everything they need from our rich and complex earth. We believe that regenerative farming and minimal intervention winemaking helps lead to terroir-driven wines that are truly made in the vineyard.

#### **A GENTLE HAND**

We harvest according to taste and find it essential to spend a lot of time in the vineyards to see how the flavours develop. All our grapes are hand-picked, cooled overnight and then processed the following morning. We sorted through all the whole bunches to ensure that only the top-quality fruit was placed via gravity into our open-top wooden fermenters. The 100% whole bunch, natural fermentation started spontaneously by utilising the wild yeasts present on the fruit. The berries were punched down twice per day, we also incorporated four delestages during the course of fermentation. Making sure not to break the stems too quickly and to slowly and softly extract the tannins, the wine was left on the skins for a total of 30 days before it was run off via gravity. The skins were then softly pressed, using a basket press and aged in older 600 litre French barrels for 24 months before bottling. The wine received no fining, which allowed the grape to be purely expressed in the wine. Only sulphur was added and no other additions, such as tartaric acid or enzymes were allowed.

#### **AND A FEW PRAYERS TO MOTHER NATURE – 2020/2021 GROWING SEASON**

South Africa's Western Cape is privileged to have a vast array of soils and climates, all within a relatively small area. Here at Waterkloof it is no different in our amphitheater of vineyards.

This vintage dates back to the old normal, which is great. A cold, wet winter. Warm spring and summer, without excessively high temperatures. The famously ferocious winds of Waterkloof have played their usual hand, naturally controlling yield and fungal disease such as mildew. Perfect. In 2021, we were picking everything at well over a hundred days from flowering. We saw very high acid levels during this vintage because of these cooler growing conditions. As with all years we had to spend a lot of time in the vineyards tasting to determine optimal ripeness and find a good balance.

We were happy to see slow ripening in the vineyards which always goes hand in hand with good quality.

#### **NADIA LANGENEGGER'S TASTING NOTE**

A lovely perfumed nose, hints of black pepper, spice and a slight savoury note. The wine has a very well-balanced tannins that lends itself to great structure and length. I enjoy sipping on this wine while eating a springbok cutlet or a different gamey meat cooked over open flames. This wine can easily keep for 10 years.

#### **THE NUMBERS (5 465 BOTTLES PRODUCED)**

Alc: 14 %  
RS: 1.79  
TA: 4.64  
pH: 3.8  
VA: 0.7