

Arabella Sauvignon Blanc 2006

Yellow green in colour. Complex green grassy nose with passion fruit, guava and pear aromas. Gooseberry, capsicum and tropical flavours on a full, rich palate with a long sweet-fruited finish.

variety : Sauvignon Blanc | 100% Sauvignon Blanc

winery : Arabella Wines

winemaker : Stephen de Wet

wine of origin : Robertson

analysis : alc : 13.0 % vol rs : 1.2 g/l pH : 3.25 ta : 6.1 g/l va : 0.34 g/l so2 : 130 mg/l fso2 : 56 mg/l

type : White **style :** Off Dry **body :** Full **taste :** Fragrant

pack : Bottle

in the vineyard : Soil Types

The vineyards are planted on the floor of what was, many millions of years ago, a great inland lake. Evidence of this lake can be seen in the massive water washed boulders. As the rainfall declined the lake dried up leaving a deposit of calcareous silt many meters thick. The drying of the soil and the effect of the elements cured the top layer of this calcareous silt into rock hard calcium carbonate. At first it was thought that these soils were only suitable for pastures as the roots of orchards and vineyards could not penetrate the calcium carbonate. The era of the big machine, which could rip through the hard calcium carbonate to a depth of 1.5 meters to access the calcareous silt underneath, changed this perception. Vineyards now flourish and produce wonderful wine where there once was arid veldt. A near perfect viticultural terroir has been created where man can manipulate conditions as he sees fit.

Clonal / Rootstock Selection

Two clones have been used, SB11 and SB215. SB11 – a South African selection known as the Weather-Station clone, is grafted from Nietvoorbij Estate. It is a very popular clone and mostly planted in South Africa, especially in Robertson, as it gives strong tropical characteristics. It is definitely better than the older clones used in Robertson. It is, however, slightly more susceptible to rot due to bunches being more compact. SB215 – This is also a South African selection that is grafted from SFW (Stellenbosch Farmers Winery). Production is medium to high with a looser bunch structure which makes it less susceptible to rot. This gives a fruity characteristic with a wide spectrum of flavours, from tropical to more green grassy flavours. These wines are generally less full than the wines from SB11 clones.

Two rootstocks are used, 101-14 and Richter 110. Some of the older vines were planted with 101-14, but it has become apparent that our soils are more suited to Richter 110. The problem with 101-14 is that it has a shallow root structure and is more prone to suffer from water stress at the critical ripening periods. Conversely, Richter 110 has a stronger root structure which enables us to better control deficit water management in the period before veraison.

Growing Season Growing Data (October – April)

Rainfall: 333.7mm

Mean Maximum Temperatures: 24.95°C

Mean Minimum Temperatures: 10.27°C

Vine Age: 3-25 years

Pruning Regime: Cordon/Spur Pruned, Vertical Shoot Positioning

about the harvest: Harvest Date: 15 January – 30 February

Yield Per Vine: (weighted average) 2.79 kg

Yield Per HA: (weighted average) 8-10 tonnes



Maturity Analysis at Harvest (weighted averages): Brix 18°-24°

Sauvignon Blanc is picked in two components, 15% Green (mid to end January at about 18° balling) and 85% Fully Ripe (early to mid February at about 24° balling). All the Sauvignon Blanc is picked in the very early morning (at first light) by hand so as to keep the berries whole and thus reducing the chances of oxidation on route to the winery.

in the cellar : Once crushed the wine is cooled through mash cooler and then pumped into an airbag press with a central inflatable membrane. The entire outer cylinder of the press has drainage holes to speed up the process of pressing, increase the amount of juice extracted and reduce oxidation. Once pressed the juice is again put through a plate cooler.

The Green portion of the Sauvignon Blanc gives cut grass and green pepper flavours with good acid. The Fully Ripe portion has tropical flavours. After the juice has fermented dry, the Green and the Fully Ripe portions are blended together to give a more complex structure to the wine.

In 2006 we will be planting Novell, which is known for its “green” flavours. It will be blended into the Sauvignon Blanc.