

False Bay Chardonnay 2008

Lime and peach aromas. A crisp acidity and mineral core which give great length, are balanced by the lime flavours on palate.

variety : Chardonnay | 100% Chardonnay

winery : Waterkloof

winemaker : Werner Engelbrecht

wine of origin : Western Cape

analysis : alc : 13.5 % vol rs : 1.86 g/l pH : 3.36 ta : 6.56 g/l

type : White **style** : Dry **body** : Medium **taste** : Mineral

pack : Bottle **closure** : Screwcap

in the vineyard : Our winemaker, Werner Engelbrecht, before joining False Bay Vineyards in 2004, worked extensively as a viticulturist and winemaker in the greater Robertson Area. It took him 2 years to convince the rest of us, but we now stand corrected. We agree that it's not only the cooler coastal areas that deliver, but if you plant the right clone in the right spot and restrict yield, then Chardonnay starts to become something totally different. Apart from those instantly seductive, typical lemony, creamy flavours that it normally develops, we have found a pronounced minerality - for us the holy grail of truly fine wines - from some vineyards in the Robertson area.

In our experience the practice of leaving white wines on the lees for an extended period, is also complemented if the wine had some degree of flintiness. Wines crafted in this manner will eventually exhibit oatmeal, cookie-dough yeastiness, without the added complexity overshadowing the pure fruit.

It was not easy to identify these vineyards. When selecting them, we had to differentiate between the impact of origin, rather than winemaking technique itself. It seemed to us the more hostile and unforgiving the terroir was, the more minerality shone through. These soils seemed to have another thing in common, being high in lime, similar to the soils of Burgundy and Sancerre. We appreciated that we needed to have some concentration in the wines, and on the whole we found that vineyards on the clay banks of the rivers criss-crossing the area, provided this element. The resulting blend gave us wines with enough structure and body, but still with a very recognizable mineral core.

2008 GROWING SEASON

Winter brought very cold weather and lots of rain, which set the vineyards up for a very good growing season. The rains continued throughout the spring. We had to do a lot of extra sprays to control disease like downy mildew. The cool weather continued into summer, which allowed for the grapes to ripen very slowly.

about the harvest: Hand-harvesting was done only in the early morning. Harvest started about 2 weeks later than usual.

in the cellar : De-stemming took place and the juice separated from skins using a bag press. Settling took place overnight at a temperature of approximately 12° Celsius. The clear juice was inoculated and fermented for almost four weeks at a temperature of approximately 15° Celsius. After completion of fermentation, it was left on the primary lees for another month in order to add more weight and complexity to the wine. It was sulphured and racked from the lees when it started to show reductive flavours.

