

Old Vines Barrel Reserve Chenin Blanc 1998

Dry but succulent and offering layers of ripe Chenin fruit. Green apple and honeyed pineapple flavours are complimented by leesy complexity and enlivened by a refreshing acidity. A serious wine for serious wine lovers, reflecting a modern approach to the Capes oldest variety.

variety : Chenin Blanc | Chenin Blanc

winery : Old Vines Cellars

winemaker : Cathy Marshall

wine of origin : Stellenbosch

analysis : alc : 13.4 % vol rs : 2.8 g/l pH : 3.35 ta : 6.8 g/l

in the cellar : The quality of our fine Chenin Blanc can be attributed to access to some of the most remarkable old vineyards in the premium wine growing area of Stellenbosch. These vineyards have been carefully selected for their variety of soils and varied exposure to the sun. But, a number of key quality factors is common to all of them: they are all either fully mature or of venerable age, and are found high on hillside slopes, carefully and meticulously tended, producing low yields of between 4-8 tons per hectare.

For the Barrel Reserve, the grapes of a very special vineyard high above the Polkadraai Road, just four kilometers from False Bay, were used. This small vineyard, of about one and a half hectares, was planted in 1967, making it 31 years old in the year of the harvest. It delivered less than six tons of tiny, perfect grapes. The south-easterly aspect also ensured that it received the freshest, cooling sea breezes of the Cape summer. From the very outset our winemaker believed that the quality of the grapes from this vineyard was so special that the wine deserved Reserve Status.

A proportion of the juice was fermented and matured in second- and third-fill François Freres casks for six months. This was blended with unwooded wine to achieve a subtle oak character that does not overshadow the fine quality Chenin fruit. Tasters will find this wine dry but succulent, with many layers of rich fruit enlivened by refreshing acidity and showing a subtle oak overlay. A serious wine for serious wine lovers, reflecting a modern approach to the Capes oldest variety.

