

Zonnebloem Fine Art Shiraz 1997

The tannins are apparent but tend to be lively rather than aggressive or astringent and will give the wine the backbone to age. It should come into its own within the next three years or so and maintain its elegance and complexity of ripe black fruits integrated with wood. The fruit comes to the fore right away revealing a concentration of plum and berry flavours with a hint of chocolate and spice. Serve with red meat or game, as well as pheasant and guinea fowl.

variety : Shiraz | Shiraz

winery : Zonnebloem Wines

winemaker : Jan de Waal

wine of origin : Coastal

analysis : alc : 14.0 % vol rs : 2.4 g/l pH : 3.7 ta : 5.5 g/l

in the cellar : The 1997 Zonnebloem Shiraz, a full-bodied but nevertheless elegant wine, was earmarked for this year's Fine Art selection, says Zonnebloem cellar master Wouter Pienaar, for its distinctive, spicy, toasted aromas, soft palate and enduring aftertaste of fruit and wood.

Every year Zonnebloem reserves a single wine of outstanding character for its Fine Art series, now in its fourth year. These wines carry the special Fine Art label, featuring the work of a prize-winning artist. The artist in this case is 18-year-old Deborah Rossouw, a graphic design student from Cape Town.

The 1997 Shiraz was made from grapes grown in three vineyards - in Durbanville, in Devon Valley, and just outside Stellenbosch in loamy, granite soil. The fruit, which was unusually firm for Shiraz, since this is a varietal which tends to shrivel when ripe, was picked on taste. Ripening was even throughout, with harvesting in early March. The grapes were picked at between 24 and 25 degrees Balling and the fruit from each vineyard vinified separately.

Ten days on the skins to allow for good colour extraction, was followed by malolactic fermentation and clarification. The wine was then transferred to fine-grained Nevers and Alliers small oak barrels for 12 months before bottling.

Pienaar believes that its sound structure and ripe tannins make this a wine that will age with distinction.



Zonnebloem Wines

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