

Waterkloof Circle of Life Red 2009

Aromas of spice and cassis dominate when the wine is first opened. Flavours become more complex if the wine is allowed to aerate for a while. A wine with great balance and texture. Soft juicy fruit on the palate is encased by fine, integrated tannins.

variety : Merlot | Merlot, Shiraz, Cabernet Franc

winery : Waterkloof

winemaker : Werner Engelbrecht

wine of origin : Stellenbosch

analysis : alc : 14.0 % vol rs : 1.90 g/l pH : 3.62 ta : 5.00 g/l va : 0.79 g/l

type : Red **style :** Dry

pack : Bottle **size :** 0 **closure :** Cork

in the vineyard : Working with nature allows us to experience its natural cycle every year. Vines awaken from their rest in spring, growing and producing fruit until the next winter when they go to sleep again. This cycle is also evident through our bio-dynamic practices that we follow on Waterkloof. Circle of Life is inspired by this cycle that exists not only on Waterkloof, but throughout life in general.

Our focus over the last 6 years has always been to get a better understanding of Waterkloof and the individual characters of its vineyards. We discovered that vineyards from different parts of Waterkloof produced wines that were stylistically very different. Through our single varietal, Waterkloof and Circumstance labels we have always tried to allow these vineyards to express their individuality.

Conversely, our objective with Circle of Life has been to produce two blends which encapsulate all the varying terroir characteristics and grape varieties within Waterkloof. Thus, rather than being constrained by a traditional blending style, for example a Bordeaux or Rhone blend, we have instead produced two wines that are not driven by varietal or a specific parcel of the vineyard, but are instead wines that reflect the totality, philosophy and specificity of Waterkloof.

2008/9 GROWING SEASON

The Winelands stayed in the grip of winter well into September of 2008. Very good rains during the winter ensured that soil retained enough moisture to sustain the vines through the long growing season. Together with cool weather during spring, it caused vineyards to ripen the grapes later than normal. Cultivars that ripen early to mid-season were 2 to 3 weeks later than normal the long, cool growing season ensured that grapes had a high natural acidity and lots of flavour. Late ripening varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon ripened on time. The result was a short and very intense harvest which lasted for about 5 weeks. In summary, 2009 was without doubt the most successful growing season we have so far experienced at Waterkloof.

about the harvest: We mainly rely on tasting the grapes to determine the optimum stage of flavour development. Grapes were picked early in the morning when they were still cool, which helps to preserve the flavours.

in the cellar : Bordeaux varieties were destemmed and Rhone varieties were whole-bunch fermented. All the reds were fermented in open top wooden fermenters with punch-downs a maximum of twice a day. The wine stayed on the skins for 30 to 40 days before being pressed. All the wines were fermented naturally without the addition of cultivated yeast.

