

## De Wetshof Estate Thibault 2009

The wine is named after Louis-Michel Thibault, the famous French architect who designed many of the Cape's magnificent 18th and 19th century buildings. The De Wetshof Estate's main building is based on Thibault's famous Koopmans-De Wet House in Cape Town, and the winery's design is also modeled on one of the architect's drawings.

The Bordeaux-style wine fuses two of the world's great classical red cultivars to create a wine of elegance, power and individuality. The soil, sun and aspect of De Wetshof allows the wine to express freshness, bright red fruit and delicate plushness. Typical Merlot and Cabernet characteristics, however, lie at the core. Here intense dark berries, bittersweet chocolate en pencil shavings about, while palate weight, depth of presence and a lasting finish enhance the experience of drinking a red wine of substance and pedigree.

A wine to savour on its own, the Thibault can also be enjoyed with roast beef and lamb, fillet steak with a mushroom-based sauce and hearty beef, lamb or game casseroles.

**variety :** Merlot | 94% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Sauvignon

**winery :** De Wetshof Estate

**winemaker :** Danie De Wet

**wine of origin :** Robertson

**analysis :** alc : 14.50 % vol   rs : 3.62 g/l   pH : 3.57   ta : 5.85 g/l   va : 0.69 g/l   so2 : 69 mg/l   fso2 : 21 mg/l

**type :** Red   **wooded**

**pack :** Bottle   **closure :** Cork

**ageing :** 6 - 15 years

**in the vineyard :** Age of vines: 10 - 11 years

Rootstock: Richter 99, 110

Vines per hectare: 4000

Trellising style: 6 wire fence system cordon with spur pruning

**Climate:**

The Robertson Valley is characterised by cold winters and sunny summers, with an average annual rainfall of 350 - 400mm. In summer a fresh southerly breeze has a cooling effect on the vineyards, allowing the grapes to ripen evenly and in perfect balance. The dry climate and the bracing breeze keep pests to a minimum, resulting in sparse spraying programmes.

**Irrigation:**

Controlled computerized irrigation systems including the monitoring of soil moisture content ensure the vines are given exactly the right amount of water at the right time to produce grapes of optimum ripeness and developed flavours.

**Soils:**

An abundance of free limestone is complemented by a heavy clay component ensuring excellent water-retention and adding structure and fullness to the wines. These soils have the highest free lime content of all the soils on De Wetshof. This adds complexity and structure to the wines, allowing optimum expression with classic red wine flavours of dark fruit, chocolate and pencil shavings.

**Rainfall:**

Robertson is a winter rainfall area with approximately 300mm per annum.

**Pest Control:** Due to a very dry climate, spraying is minimal compared to other wine growing regions.



**about the harvest:** The Thibault is made from two site-specific vineyards on the De Wetshof Estate. Merlot Block 8 is 3.96ha and planted to 12 846 vines in 2001. Cabernet Sauvignon Block 11 was planted in 2000 and comprises 8 611 vines on 2.65ha.

**in the cellar :** De Wetshof is a third generation wine estate in South Africa's Robertson Valley, where wine has been made for over 150 years. Here Danie de Wet, proprietor and cellar-master, is assisted by sons and co-owners Johann (viticulture and marketing) and Peter (winemaker). De Wetshof Estate is a pioneer of noble white wines in South Africa and has also introduced red cultivars in the Robertson Wine Valley.

On De Wetshof a firm belief prevails, namely that one cannot know where you are going unless you know where you have come from. This is why the history of De Wetshof's vineyards plays a profound role in determining present and future wine quality. Since the early 1970's meticulous records have been kept on each vineyard as to the plants' reaction to soil-types, irrigation and vagaries of climate, as well as their development and progress over the years. Each vineyard is thus vinified separately during the winemaking process, the winemakers having a clear understanding of what the fruit of each vineyard's labour is going to deliver during a specific year.

This commitment to site-specific vineyard management and winemaking has been an integral part of the De Wetshof ethos from the outset and remains a vital and non-negotiable aspect of all the Estate's wines.

The grapes are picked in the coolness of the morning, and the emphasis is on capturing powerful fruit at a full ripe stage when developed flavours of pure dark berry fruit prevail alongside soft juicy tannins. These characteristics needed to create a wine of structure, elegance and depth.

After de-stemming the grapes are cooled down and moved to tank for a few days' cold-soaking on the skins before fermentation starts. The wine ferments dry on the skins and after racking and pressing the young wines are moved into French Oak barrels specially selected by Monsieur Christian Radoux.

The fine French oak enhances the fresh fruity aromas and flavours as the wines go through malolactic fermentation. After malolactic fermentation the wines are taken off the lees into fresh barrels for further maturation. Some 18 months after harvest, the wines are blended and prepared for bottling.

Barrel maturation: 18 months

Danie de Wet adjusts his methods of winemaking from year to year, according to weather conditions and grape quality, in the belief that wine is made in the vineyard and not in the cellar.

## De Wetshof Estate

Robertson

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[www.dewetshof.com](http://www.dewetshof.com)