

Asara Vineyard Collection Chenin Blanc 2013

The colour has an attractive pale golden hue with a slight green tinge. On the nose you will find a clean, ripe fruit melody, rich in guava, pineapple and melon, layered with hints of honeysuckle and subtle vanilla pod. A harmonious balance between fruit and subtle oakling. The oak-imparted mouth-feel that is felt rather than tasted, forms complex, soft flavours with sufficient body to enhance even spicy full flavoured meals. The finish is long, concentrated and persistent.

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variety : Chenin Blanc | 100 Chenin Blanc

winery : Asara Wine Estate and Hotel

winemaker : Francois Joubert

wine of origin : Polkadraai Hills

analysis : alc : 13.95 % vol rs : 1.9 g/l pH : 3.46 ta : 6.1 g/l

type : Rose **style :** Dry **body :** Full **taste :** Fruity **wooded**

pack : Bottle **size :** 750ml **closure :** Screwcap

A generous yield in Asara's two Chenin Blanc vineyard blocks afforded winemaker Francois Joubert a golden opportunity to experiment with an in-barrel wild yeast ferment. The idea was to capture the essence of what each block is capable of delivering, with an eye on what might emerge as a possible future label. The two vineyard blocks, normally produce grapes for a Noble Late Harvest wine, which relies on the essential ingredient, Botrytis cinerea, or "noble rot" fungus to infect these grapes. This also infected some of the grapes picked for this wine, giving intense, honeysuckle aromas.

The barrels were parked in a corner of the cellar and left to go about their business in the cool, undisturbed dimness, with Francois keeping his eagle eye on its progress, and he was ecstatic with what evolved. Asara's Vineyard range stays true to vineyard of origin by means of minimal cellar handling. The property is located in the Polkadraai, whose primary vineyard influence is granite based soils and undulating hills.

in the vineyard : The two blocks of Chenin Blanc at Asara, - 2.27ha planted in 2005 at 50m above sea level, and 1.9ha planted in 1995, at 200m above sea level on a steep South-west facing slope – provide the contrasting characteristics needed to make a great wine. The younger, higher yielding block imparts great acidity and vibrancy of fruit, whereas the older block, with a lower yield, proves that age does matter: it delivers mouthfeel, minerality and depth. Being just over 15 km from False Bay the influence of the cooling sea breeze effect means longer ripening and hanging time.

The vines age means that they have attuned themselves to the site, and have developed complex root systems that are capable of extracting nutrients from the relatively poor granitic soils. Although yields are fairly high, berry size was relatively small and bunches were quite loose, contributing to the concentration and intensity of the pallet. Viticulture is aimed at achieving full phenolic ripeness without sacrificing freshness and fruit purity, and the grapes hung on the vines for somewhat longer than usual.

about the harvest: The grapes were harvested by hand on February 20, between 23.5 and 24 Balling into small crates.

in the cellar : Only the free run juice was selected to go to 11 x 225l French barrels, where it underwent a spontaneous wild ferment. Fermentation took a lot longer than the usual 2-3 weeks and finished 6 weeks later, but with the long ferment came longer palate weight and increased mouthfeel. The lees was stirred twice weekly for



the first month, thereafter weekly, until the end of July. After four months on primary lees it was racked then returned to barrel to age on the finer lees, until bottling. The wine did not undergo malolactic fermentation.