



South Africa

Our offer of wines from the Cape last spring was extremely well-received, winning us the International Wine Challenge award for Specialist Wine Merchant of the Year for South Africa, and, more importantly, resulting in well-attended tastings and excellent sales. Clearly our mix of established superstar estates, such as Chamonix and Cederberg, alongside the new wave of young winemakers, such as Gavin Brand at Cape Rock and Leon Coetzee at The Fledge, struck a chord.

So...here we go again, with numerous new wines: a wider selection of strikingly labelled (and often weirdly blended) bottles from Pieter Walser at Blankbottle; the top V Generations Chenin Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon from Cederberg; new fizz, rosé and Syrah to add to the fabulous Chardonnay and Pinot Noir from Domaine des Dieux in Hemel-en-Aarde; a plush Cabernet Franc from Chamonix; and the return of the luscious Rustenberg Straw wine.

Simon Taylor
March 2017

STONE, VINE & SUN



WINE MERCHANTS



Mixed Cases

All mixed cases include two bottles of each of six wines, at a discount of 10% or more. See also the Fabulous White Blends case on page 7.

Bakkie Benchmarks £84.85

Code SA117

Three whites and three reds

False Bay, Chenin Blanc, 2015 (p.3)
Goedverwacht, Great Expectations Chardonnay, 2016 (p.4)
Cape Heights, Viognier, 2016 (p.5)
False Bay, Pinotage, 2014 (p.9)
Lemberg, Cape Blend, 2013 (p.9)
Goedverwacht, Great Expectations Shiraz, 2013 (p.10)

Cool Whites Case £133.90

Code SA217

Six whites

Secateurs, Chenin Blanc, 2016 (p.3)
Cape Atlantic, Sauvignon Blanc, 2016 (p.4)
Chamonix, Unoaked Chardonnay, 2016 (p.4)
Domaine des Dieux, Chardonnay, 2013 (p.4)
Nitida, Riesling, 2015 (p.5)
The Fledge, Vagabond, 2014 (p.6)

SA Winners £136.40

Code SA317

Three whites and three reds

Cederberg, Chenin Blanc, 2016 (p.3)
Fryers's Cove, Sauvignon Blanc, 2016 (p.4)
Nitida, Semillon, 2015 (p.5)
Cape Rock, Capa Roca, 2014 (p.9)
Secateurs, Red, 2013 (p.11)
Fryers Cove, Pinot Noir, 2013 (p.12)

Cape Celebration £182.85

Code SA417

One fizz, two whites and three reds

Domaine des Dieux, Claudia, Méthode Cap Classique (p.2)
Cape Rock, White, 2016 (p.7)
Chamonix, Reserve White, 2014 (p.7)
Nitida, Calligraphy, 2014 (p.8)
Cederberg, Shiraz, Cederberg, 2015 (p.10)
Domaine des Dieux, Josephine Pinot Noir, 2012 (p.12)

South Africa Tasting



Thursday 27th April, 6.00 to 8.30pm

Venue: our shop in Twyford

Come and taste about twenty-five wines from this list; a snapshot of the variety of grapes, blends and styles available in the Cape. From fizz to sweet, this should be a celebration.

10% off all bottle prices of wines in the tasting

Please call or email us to indicate if you are planning to come so we can judge numbers - last year we were expecting 30 and 55 arrived, preventing us from giving as good a service as we would like!

Sparkling Wine

Nitida, The Matriarch, Méthode Cap Classique, Coastal Region, 2012, 11.5%

Bottle £14.50 Case £165.30 Code NIT812

This is the third vintage of this sparkling blend of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay from Nitida's cool coastal vineyards at Durbanville.

Engaging scent of ripe citrus and white flowers. Bright, youthful and elegantly balanced palate, showing a hint of crisp pineapple, with a creamy gentle mousse rounding to a crisp finish. Drink this year

Domaine des Dieux, Claudia, Méthode Cap Classique, Brut, 2010, 12%

Bottle £17.95 Case £204.63 Code DDD4NV

Introduced last autumn, this has already proved a hit. Sharon Parnell, owner of Des Dieux, was the first to begin making sparkling wine in the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley, rightly building on the region's success with Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Claudia is Sharon's elder daughter.

81% Chardonnay and 19% Pinot, made in the Champagne method, given 40 months on its lees, and one of the best New World fizzes we have tried in years: soft mousse; and then yeasty, creamy and complex. Very persistent. No surprise this won a Gold medal in the prestigious **2016 Champagne & Sparkling Wine World Championship**. Now-2018

And one Rosé...

Domaine des Dieux, Petit Rosé, Hemel-en-Aarde, 2016, 12.5%

Bottle £11.50 Case £131.10 Code DDD516

We don't often ship Cape Rosé, but couldn't resist this Provençale style blend of 50 % Mourvèdre, 33% Grenache & 17% Syrah.

Pale in tone. Open red-berried scent, consistent with a ripe raspberry and peach palate. This is a full-flavoured, dry rosé, a perfect accompaniment to Mediterranean food or a barbecue. Now-2018

Note - arriving late April

Chenin Blanc

Chenin Blanc, also known as Steen in the Cape, is the country's most widely planted and distinctive grape. Whilst growers in Anjou and in particular Savinnières might disagree, the Cape is the source of the best dry Chenin in the world.

Cape Heights, Chenin Blanc, Western Cape, 2016, 12.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £6.50 Case £74.10 Code CAH116

The Cape Heights brand is a project of a major UK wine business, Boutinot. We really respect Marinda Kruger-Van Eck's skill in both sourcing fruit from all over the Cape and winemaking. This includes dry-farmed bush-vine Chenin from Paardeberg, Paarl and the Drakenstein area,

So good for the price: textbook Chenin nose of white flowers and pears; bright, citrus and green fruit; and attractive concentration for a wine at this level. Drink this year

False Bay, Chenin Blanc, Coastal Region, 2015, 13% [Screwcap]

Bottle £7.50 Case £85.50 Code FAB115

False Bay is the second label of Waterkloof, an estate with a superb contemporary winery set on a bluff high above Somerset West. From dry-farmed, bush vines in the Paardeberg and Riebeek Valley, this is slowly fermented for no less than 11 months, using only wild yeasts.

Gentle, honeyed scent. This is richly textured for a wine at this price, weighty, offering a generous, well-flavoured heart of white peach and crisp pineapple. Drink this year.

The Fledge, Klipspringer, Swartland, 2014, 12.5%

Bottle £15.50 £9.95 Code FLE314

A wine which needs drinking fairly soon, hence a big discount. From old bushvine Chenin Blanc grown on the Paardeberg on decomposed granite, this is unoaked, but given lengthy ageing on the lees: well-textured, subtle pineapple and grapefruit flavours, satiny, with herbal hints. A Klipspringer (from Afrikaans, literally "rock jumper") is a dumpy-looking but surprisingly agile, mountain-living antelope. Drink this year

Secateurs, Chenin Blanc, Swartland, 2016, 12.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £11.25 Case £128.25 Code BAD116

Secateurs is the second label of winemaking genius Adi Badenhorst. About 10% of this wine goes into old oak barrels, giving volume rather than oak flavour, and the wine gains weight from about seven months on its lees. This is just so creamy and textured for the price.

Sunnily exotic fruit - tangerines and lime - with a suggestion of brazil nuts. Could easily be served with chicken, seafood, or just enjoyed as an impressive aperitif. Now-2018

Cederberg, Chenin Blanc, Cederberg, 2016, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £11.75 Case £133.95 Code CED116

Always our benchmark wine at this estate, a mountain-fresh wine from the highest altitude vineyards in the Cape, at between and 3,000 and 3,300 feet.

As usual, almost water white. Open, appealing scent of fresh pineapple and citrus. Mouthwatering entry of pineapple, lime and white peach. Exotic flavours but zippy; and finishes dry and mineral. Now-2018

Cederberg, Five Generations Chenin Blanc, Cederberg, 2014, 13.5%

Bottle £21.95 Case £250.23 Code CED514

David Niewoudt bottled just nine barrels, 360 cases, of this top white, a barrel-fermented Chenin of great freshness and intensity.

Very pale and clear. Strong dairy barrel aromas; and that creamy oak comes through, counterpointed by vibrant flavours of ripe citrus and guava. Hint of salt. Great potential for development. Now-2020

Rated *Outstanding*, 95 points, in **Decanter** magazine, November 2016. Greg Sherwood, MW: "A very linear style from Cederberg, this has rapier-fresh acidity and tremendous textural depth. Great now but will develop with bottle age".



Sauvignon Blanc

The particular virtue of the best South African Sauvignon - sourced as here from cool sites - is to lie in style in between the classic restraint of the Loire and the extremely fruity New Zealand idiom.

Cape Atlantic Sauvignon Blanc, Western Cape, 2016, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £9.25 Case £105.45 Code CED616

Although there is no mention on the label (adorned with a gannet's head), this wine is from the young Sauvignon parcels at Cederberg in the mountains, plus some fruit from owner David Niewoudt's Ghost Corner vineyards at windswept Elim, near the southernmost point of Africa. Sourced from these cool vineyards it's always a steely example, clean, precise and well-priced given its pedigree and quality.

Grassy and nettle scent. Mouth-wateringly crisp, showing classic gooseberry Sauvignon fruit, with an irony bite. Now-2018

Fryer's Cove, Sauvignon Blanc, Bamboes Bay, 2016, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £12.95 Case £147.63 Code FRY116

On the outskirts of Strandfontein, a peaceful village on the Atlantic coast 300 kilometres north of Cape Town, lies an isolated 6 hectare vineyard just 800 metres from the Atlantic Ocean. The micro-climate is extraordinary - very often the vines here are blanketed in a thick sea-fog, whilst only a few kilometers away inland the sun may be shining and the temperature torrid - and the subsoil is pure limestone, ideal for Sauvignon Blanc. This is one of South Africa's most interesting and characterful Sauvignons, made right on the dockside in Strandfontein, the only seawater-cooled winery we ship from. A very small amount of this wine is fermented in barrel.

This irony and mineral wine is a Cape Pouilly-Fumé. Smoky, gooseberry and peapod aromas; then an intense mouthful of gooseberry and passion-fruit, checked by crisp minerality. Some tasters claim to taste salt in this wine - which is entirely possible given the proximity to the sea, as the saline sea mist leaves fine salt flakes on the grapes. Now-2019

Case prices (for an unsplit case of 12) are at a 5% discount to bottle prices

Chardonnay

Goedverwacht, Great Expectations Chardonnay, Robertson, 2016, 13% [Screwcap]

Bottle £7.95 Case £90.63 Code GDV116

The 2016 vintage is even better than the 2015 which was such a success last year - lower in alcohol and a mite livelier. For a modestly priced wine this shows an attractive balance between ripe fruit, minimal oak flavour (from the suspension of oak staves in the tank) and excellent freshness.

Gently creamy, with lime and melon flavours, this is a very correct, easy-quaffing, generous Chardonnay. Now-2018

Chamonix, Unoaked Chardonnay, Franschhoek, 2016, 12.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £12.50 Case £142.50 Code CHX916

Chamonix's unoaked Chardonnay, crafted using only wild yeasts, always shows splendid weight and character.

Clear - with a green tinge. Super-fresh, leafy/green perfume. Sprightly, racy even, with subtle cream and mineral notes. Excellent finish. More sophisticated than of old. Now-2018

Domaine des Dieux, Chardonnay, Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge, 2013, 13.5%

Bottle £14.95 Case £170.43 Code DDD113

This Chardonnay was our best discovery of last year - a classy, cool climate example from a small estate just above Ataraxia at the top of the valley in the Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge zone. We have now moved to the 2013 vintage, wholly consistent in style: it's a full-flavoured, perfectly-ready-to-drink, barrel-fermented and aged (about 30% new oak) Chardonnay of concentration and length. The 2013 vintage came 19th in a blind tasting of 120 premium Chardonnays held by **Decanter** magazine recently, highly recommended.

Splendidly open scent, with lots of green fruit and clean oak. This builds so well, full-flavoured and with lots of energy. Butter, lime and a hint of chalkiness. So complete. Now-2018

*"Surprisingly developed already, this has smoky gunflint aromas which led tantalisingly onto sweet honey, truffle oil and mushrooms. There is enormous complexity here - a joint venture between sweet lemon acidity and savoury limestone. 92/100", **Decanter** magazine, April 2017*

Chamonix, Reserve Chardonnay, Franschhoek, 2015, 13%

Bottle £23.50 Case £267.90 Code CHX715

A 2017 Platter Wine Guide 5 star winner, again confirming this as one of the Cape's top Chardonnays. From vines at 400-500m up, the fruit is all barrel-fermented and then

20% goes into Nomblot concrete eggs.

So open - that expensive vanilla scent of smart oak barrels alongside apple and ripe melon - but in the mouth more restrained. Mid weight, with a subtle hint of orange peel, this is polished and will keep very well. Now-2022

*"Alluring lemon butter, green apple, buttered toast and subtle crème brûlée characters meld together elegantly on the palate. It is fresh and linear with classy acidity in a tightly wound, unyielding style. 92/100", **Decanter** magazine, April 2017*

Ataraxia, Chardonnay, Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge, 2014, 13.5%

Bottle £23.50 Case £267.90 Code ATA114

Ataraxia, with vineyards on the slopes of the 1200 metre high Babylon's Toren, is the creation of Kevin Grant, formerly the hugely admired winemaker at Hamilton Russell at the foot of the valley. The winery is named after the Greek word for a tranquil state of mind, free from worry or preoccupation; and Kevin seeks to make wines of equilibrium and harmony.

Now sourced entirely from cool-climate sites in Hemel-en-Aarde, picked in late March, barrel-fermented, and aged in 26% new French barrels, 74% second fill, for 9 months. Overt buttery oak is cut by lime. Rich, creamy and exciting. An acknowledged new world classic, applauded everywhere. Now-2020

Other Whites: Dry, Medium-dry and Sweet

Cape Heights, Viognier, Western Cape, 2016, 14.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £6.95 Case £79.23 Code CAH316

From fruit grown on granite-based soils around Worcester, a warm zone perfect for ripening Viognier at the high yield necessary for this price.

Open, peachy perfume. Abundant stone fruit, demonstrating excellent varietal character. Sufficiently fresh and lively too. Drink this year

Cederberg, Bukettraube, Cederberg, 2016, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £11.25 Case £128.25 Code CED316

"Cederberg produce a well-made, exotically-fruited version with around 25g/l [grams per litre] residual sugar", Jancis Robinson [and others], Wine Grapes, 2012. Bukettraube, a 19th century German cross between Silvaner and the obscure Schiva Grossa, is barely grown outside South Africa, but handled well it makes a delicious medium dry wine (about 22 grams of residual sugar per litre), perfect well-chilled as a summer aperitif, with liver pâté or Thai-style seafood.

Intriguing aromas, showing a Muscat-like grapiness with a slightly smoky note. Sweet orange attack, but with a crisp spine. Now-2018

Nitida, Sémillon, Durbanville, 2015, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £11.95 Case £136.23 Code NIT115

Nitida, with vineyards on the hills of Durbanville near Cape Town, just 9 kms away from the cool Atlantic and enjoying fresh south-east wind all summer, lies in a coolish climate zone by Cape standards. It's well-known for growing high quality Sémillon: half of this wine is barrel fermented, a good proportion in new French oak.

A reductive wine-making style (i.e. minimizing exposure to oxygen) produces a smoky / struck match nose; but on the palate this is vividly green-fruited, showing green fig, pear and passion-fruit. Grassy, mouthwatering and pungent, this will keep decently too. Now-2019

Delivery charges* to one address are as follows:

1-5 bottles: £10.00,

6-11 bottles: £8.50,

1 case of 12 bottles: £5.95,

12-24 bottles: £8.50

Please note:

- Free delivery for orders of £150 or more (to one address), or over £75 in the Winchester area.
- *Delivery prices vary for delivery to the highlands, islands and Northern Ireland - please ask us for a quote.



Nitida, Riesling, Durbanville, 2015, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £11.95 Case £136.23 Code NIT415

The Nitida Riesling has just enough residual sugar - about 6.5 grams a litre - to give some richness and balance to this dry Riesling.

Pale and clear. Perfume of peach apricot and lavender. Open, exuberant pink grapefruit palate. Hint of honeycomb. Lovely on its own or with Asian food. Now-2018

Lemberg, Hárslevelű, Tulbagh, 2013, 14%

Bottle £14.75 Case £168.15 Code LEM813

The first winemaker at Lemberg, Janey Muller, planted some Hárslevelű, a Hungarian vine, in 1978, and more recently the current owners, Henk du Bruyn and Suzette van Rensburg have replanted the variety since taking over in 2001.

A tiny production wine - we took nearly a fifth of the vintage - this is made in a deliberately oxydised style, aged in 500 litre French barrels. That oxidative winemaking (think sherry) shows in an apple skin fragrance, and a complex, pungent and savoury palate with notes of dried apples and lime. This is most akin to styles from the Roussillon or Savennières. Now-2018

And a Sweet Wine

Rustenberg, Straw Wine, Stellenbosch, 2015, 10.5%

Half bottle £10.95 Case (12 x 37.5cl.) £124.83 Code RUS915

The straw wine - from bunches of grapes left to desiccate on straw, thereby increasing concentration and sweetness - used to be made only occasionally at Rustenberg, but seems to be becoming an annual fixture now.

This is from 88% Chenin Blanc with some Viognier to give apricot lift. Honeyed, but with zippy acidity and nuances of candied oranges, this is deliciously intense. It contains a whopping 168 grams of sugar per litre but isn't in the least cloying. Now-2015

White Blends

South Africa's distinctive strength: it now offers the widest selection of white blends from anywhere in the world: there are Chenin Blanc based blends; there are highly successful Bordeaux style blends from Sauvignon and Sémillon, for example Nitida's Coronata Integration and Chamonix's Reserve White, which have performed extremely well at blind tastings of oaked Sauvignons against much more expensive wines from Bordeaux, California and Australia. Perhaps best of all are the splendidly stone-fruited blends based on Rhône varieties - Viognier, Roussanne, Marsanne and Grenache Blanc. And then there is one blend, Adi Badenhorst's Family White, which includes Loire, Rhône, Bordeaux and Iberian grapes!

These wines are often made by young winemakers who don't own any vineyards, instead seeking out farmers owning: interesting patches of vines in off the beaten track regions; or unusual grape varieties; or low-yielding old vines - and then contracting to buy their fruit.

Production of these wines is often tiny. Wine-making is resolutely old-fashioned, eschewing interference. So these wines tend to be made from hand-harvested fruit; lightly pressed; fermented using only wild yeasts; and aged in old barrels, never new oak.

The Fledge, Vagabond, Western Cape, 2014, 12%

Bottle £14.50 Case £165.30 Code FLE114

Leon Coetzee and Margaux Nel seek out parcels of grapes, often from outside the conventional regions, to bring back to their cellar in the Karoo. 60% Viognier from the Klein Karoo with 40% Stellenbosch Chenin Blanc, barrel fermented.

The Viognier offers a scent of pure apricots with white flowers. This is cool, apricotty and balanced, with refreshing bite. Very pure, beautifully textured and a pretty perfume on the finish. Drink this year

Nitida, Coronata Integration, Durbanville, 2014, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £14.95 Case £170.43 Code NIT314

This won the top Platter 5 star award, described thus in the 2016 Platter's guide: "*Smooth, silky 14 combines barrel-fermented sémillon (60%) for creamy texture and baking spice with tank fermented sauvignon for fruit purity, this vintage less 'green' than 13 - more 'golden' (yellow apples and cling peaches), with tangy apricot finish*".

This is an impressively accurate summary - it's less steely and altogether more approachable than the previous vintage (though also worthy of keeping). Lime and more exotic fruit. Can stand up to spicy food, chicken or fish. Now-2019

Blankbottle, Offspring, Western Cape, 2015, 14.5%

Bottle £16.95 Case £193.23 Code BBO215

Pieter Walser at Blankbottle is a master blender, sourcing lots of different component grapes from all over the western Cape, and then spending hours blending them to make exciting and harmonious bottles. This wine, named because in part it's the child of Orbitofrontal Cortex (see below) and Limbic, is, as Pieter says, "thoughtfully blended - Semillon from Elgin, Chenin Blanc from Wellington and Verdelho from the Voor Paardeberg" (plus some Chardonnay), given 12 months in older French barrels.

Struck-match aroma (indicative of reductive winemaking) and then a lively mouthful of stone fruit with a tangerine note. Now-2018

Case prices (for an unsplit case of 12) are at a 5% discount to bottle prices





Blankbottle, DOK, Elgin, 2014, 13.5%

Bottle £16.95 Case £193.23 Code BBO414

Winemaker Pieter Walser writes: "This is the 3rd vintage of DOK, and I am so sorry to say, also the last. This white blend made of mainly Weisser Riesling, Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc is made of ELGIN grapes that grow on Dr. Gary's farm... hence the name. He sold the farm last year. And the new owner has different plans for the vineyards. So, if you liked this wine, buy it now. The wine is super fresh, textured, vibrant and energetic. All components made separately in older French oak barrels, fermented there and aged for a year on the lees". Now-2018

Blankbottle, Moment of Silence, Wellington, 2016, 14%

Bottle £16.95 Case £193.23 Code BBO116

The latest vintage of this highly popular wine. It's a blend of Chenin Blanc from four different sites, plus Grenache Blanc and Viognier (so Chardonnay has been dropped from the mix), barrel-fermented and aged on the lees for a year.

Quite deep colour. Whilst this is as bold, full-flavoured and concentrated as ever, the flavour profile seems to have changed: without the Chardonnay it's more intensely stone-fruited. But it's complex too, creamy and nutty. Now-2018

Note - arriving late April

Cape Rock, White, Olifants River, 2016, 11.5%

Bottle £16.95 Case £193.23 Code CAP116

Cape Rock is the creation of Gavin Brand, a mildly introverted and modest landscape architect in Cape Town. His family's 11 hectare farm is near the Olifants river, between the towns of Vredendal and Klawer, 300kms. north of Cape Town and 30 km inland from Doringbaai on the west coast. Jancis Robinson wrote up the last vintage of this delicious white blend in the **FT** magazine before Christmas so our stock vanished quickly: but we all think the 2016 is better. From one complanted vineyard, it's a blend of 40% Viognier, 31% Grenache Blanc and 29% Roussanne, barrel fermented, and aged for just a few months in old barrels.

This is a very polished wine, rounded, perfectly balanced, showing gentle peach fruit with a hint of fennel. There's lanolin suavity and a dry stony character on the finish. Note too the lowish alcohol level, distinctly unusual in the new world.

Now-2018

Chamonix, Reserve White, Franschhoek, 2014, 13.5%

Bottle £17.75 Case £202.35 Code CHX614

From 75% Sauvignon Blanc and 25% Sémillon. Assured winemaking: all barrel fermented (about 10% of the Sauvignon whole bunch fermented); then into French barrels, 40% new, and about a third of the wine goes through malolactic fermentation.

Dazzling, vivid green fruit, green apple and fig, with floral and stone fruit notes as a backdrop. With stunning presence, this would knock out many a top Graves. Great to drink now, but we know this wine keeps beautifully too. Now-2020

Blankbottle, Orbitofrontal Cortex, Western Cape, 2015, 14%

Bottle £20.95 Case £238.83 Code BBO315

This is one of Pieter's two "Brain" wines. Basically he wired himself up to electrodes while he was tasting a number of different white blends. Orbitofrontal Cortex was, as Pieter put it, "the best white blend from my cellar according to my conscious mind... named after the scientific name for the part of your brain where conscious decisions are made". It's a blend of Piekenierskloof Grenache blanc, Swartland Clairette Blanche, Swartland Fernão Pires, Elgin Semillon and Voor Paardeberg Verdelho.

Like all Pieter's best whites, this is concentrated and honeyed, with nuances of pears and fat nuts. Clean acid cut. Intense and lasting. Now-2020

"A mix of grapes that will make your head spin, this is a new addition to Pieter Walser's eccentric portfolio. This Rhône style blend is weighty with ripe white fruit and honey notes. The textured palate is balanced, with fruit richness and acidity and a nice grip on the finish". Christelle Guibert, Weekday Wines in **Decanter**, April 2017.

Limited stock

Badenhost, Family White, Coastal Region, 2014, 13.5%

Bottle £23.50 Case £267.90 Code BAD314

This is the top white blend made by Adi Badenhorst, hirsute parrot breeder and winemaking genius. The target is consistent, a densely textured, complex wine, based on fruit from the family vineyards on the Paardeberg: in this vintage 31% Chenin Blanc, 17% Grenache Blanc, 14% Roussanne, 12% Verdelho, 8% Clairette Blanche, 7% Viognier, 6% Semillon, 3% Marsanne and 2% Palomino, all given about a year in large 500 or 600l. old barrels.

Penetrating nose: both floral and showing stone fruit. Dry, concentrated Chenin is always the base note, and the Rhône varieties bring stone fruit and weight. Superb, multi-faceted, and very long indeed. Now-2021

Fabulous White Blends Case £176.50 Code SA517

A dozen including two bottles of each of the six wines listed with a discount of 10%

The Fledge, Vagabond
Nitida, Coronata Integration
Blankbottle, Offspring
Blankbottle, DOK
Cape Rock, White
Chamonix, Reserve White

Bordeaux Varieties

South Africa's red wine plantings were historically based on Bordeaux varieties, and most of the famed reds of old were Bordeaux blends. However, it's a legacy which is mixed, as a lot of the winelands are too hot to give the ideal growing conditions for varieties such as Merlot.

More recently the planting of new, virus-free clones has enabled Cape Cabernet Sauvignon in particular to be cleaned up, and with improved viticulture the wines are getting better and better.

Goedverwacht, Great Expectations Crane Red, Merlot, Robertson, 2015, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £7.50 Case £85.50 Code GDV415

This is old-fashioned and gutsy, like Cape reds of twenty years ago.

Ruby tone. Scent of cooked berries and a little leafiness. Savoury, meaty flavours, with hints of coffee and spice. Not subtle, mildly rustic, but none the worse for it. Drink this year

Ridgeback, Lionhound Cabernet Sauvignon, Paarl, 2012, 13.5%

Bottle £8.50 Case £96.90 Code RIG612

Correct, blackcurrant scent; and that curranty black fruit comes through on the palate. Some gentle oak accents (from ageing on staves), on a gutsy, finely grained, old fashioned style. Nicely ready. Drink this year

Ridgeback, Merlot, Paarl, 2013, 13.5%

Bottle £14.50 Case £165.30 Code RIG813

Aged, like a decent Bordeaux, in 30% new barrels, this shows impressive vanilla and black fruit aromas - similar to a fine Right Bank wine.

Smooth and well-textured, with red-berried and cassis flavours, this is plush and smart - and has gone down very well at customer tastings. Now-2019

Nitida, Calligraphy, Durbanville, 2011, 14.5%

Bottle £15.95 Case £181.83 Code NIT814

Very much in a Right Bank Bordeaux idiom - 52% Merlot, 24% Cabernet Franc, 18% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Petit Verdot, all in French oak, 25% new - and with considerable keeping potential, 2014 vintage is a big step up on former years, bursting with life, texture and aromatics.

Perfume of red fruits, black plum and Indian spices. Smooth but generous plum and raspberry flavours, not at all over-ripe, instead classy, even delicate. Now-2022

Chamonix, Cabernet Franc, Franschhoek, 2014, 14%

Bottle £16.95 Case £193.23 Code CHX514

We have not shipped this wine before, but once we tasted this it was inevitable.

A beguiling scent of vanilla over dark fruit prefaces a delectable glass of ripe, almost jellied, brambly fruit with hints of spice. Smooth and harmonious, a winner. Now-2020

Cederberg, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cederberg, South Africa, 2014, 14%

Bottle £16.95 Case £193.23 Code CED714

Cabernet enjoys a long ripening period in the 3,000 feet high vineyards, excellent for developing aromatics: this isn't picked until mid April, three months after the harvest starts in hotter corners of the Cape! From vines on largely west-facing plots, this goes into French oak, none new.

Classic blackcurrant Cabernet perfume; and that follows onto a silky, classy palate, with layers of black fruit, backed by fine tannins. Now-2020

Chamonix, Troika, Franschhoek, 2013, 14.5%

Bottle £18.95 Case £216.03 Code CHX213

Troika is usually, as the name implies, a blend of three grapes but in this vintage it's 40% Cabernet Franc, 38% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Petit Verdot and 10% Merlot, given 18 months in barrel, about 60% new.

This is dominated by really ripe Cabernet Franc, fleshy and perfumed, but with plenty of power and grip - and pure blackcurrant aroma - from the Cabernet Sauvignon too. Generous lush black fruit, concentrated and svelte. Now-2020

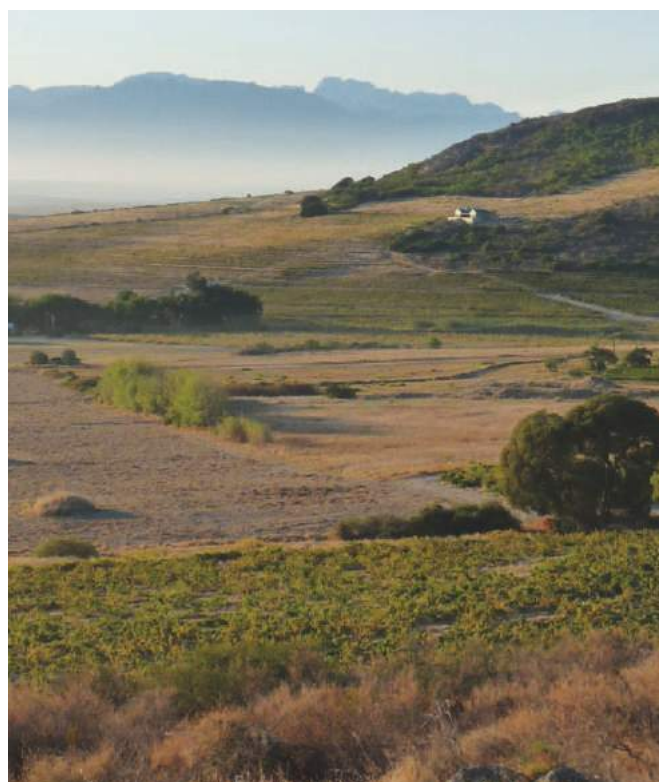
Cederberg, V Generations Cabernet Sauvignon, 2015, 14.5%

Bottle £32.50 Case £370.50 Code CED915

Just released - so we have snaffled a little of this tiny production (less than 300 cases a year) wonder. The fruit is from one vineyard, and then David Niewoudt makes a selection of the best barrels.

Very, very deeply hued. Cedar and blackcurrant nose. Crunchy, vivid black fruit, very youthful. Super-ripe tannins. Appealing hint of violets. This is an impressive wine. Now-2024

Note: arriving late April





Pinotage & Other Red Blends

Pinotage

Pinotage is the one original South African grape, developed by Abraham Perold in Stellenbosch in 1925 by crossing Pinot Noir and Cinsaut, then known as Hermitage. It has the acidity of the former parent and the warm generosity of the latter. By 1990 plantings had declined to less than 1% of the country's vineyards, but there has been a considerable recovery in recent years, helped by a new understanding of how to realise its potential by improved viticulture, and also an increasing use of Pinotage as a blending ingredient. The "Cape Blend" must include at least 30% Pinotage. At the same time it's a Marmite grape, enjoyed by some but despised by others...

False Bay Pinotage, Coastal Region, 2014, 14% [Screwcap]

Bottle £7.50 Case £85.50 Code FAB814

Plum coloured. High-toned scent of berries with the merest hint of tarriness. Bittersweet raspberry and bilberry fruit, bold and juicy, with just a smidge of tannin which makes this food-friendly, a good accompaniment to roast pork or the barbecue. This is quite a light and graceful Pinotage. Now-2018

Chamonix, Greywacke Pinotage, Franschhoek, 2013, 14.5%

Bottle £16.50 Case £188.10 Code CHX413

Do you want to see how good Pinotage can be when handled by a master winemaker? Winemaker Gottfried Mocke leaves some bunches cut but hanging in the vineyard and then adds these in a ripasso manner to promote a second fermentation. Ageing is in French oak, 30% new.

Vibrant blackberry, damson and liqueur cherry attack, intensely bittersweet, with barrel coffee hints. Very smooth, ripe tannins. Still young, but suave. Quite akin to a fine Zinfandel, and as such excellent with grilled steak. Now-2020

"An unusual red that combines carbonic maceration with dried-on-the-vine grapes to produce something that tastes like a Pinotage crossed with a Valpolicella Ripasso. Juicy, yet grippy. 95/100", Decanter, June 2016.

Other blends

Note the appearance of Portuguese varieties: these have a traditional place in the Cape, usually planted for fortified Cape port. Now winemakers are realising their potential for dry wines.

Lemberg, Cape Blend, Western Cape, 2013, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £8.75 Case £99.75 Code LEM113

A "Cape Blend" has to have at least 30% Pinotage, the country's unique creation: here it is paired with 55% Syrah and incestuously with 15% Pinot Noir, one of its genetic parents. Mid ruby. This is a bold, fresh red with a bit of edge and tannin, a robust, lightly oaked wine for red meat. Lively, raspberryish fruit, decently aromatic, but gutsy too. Drink this year

Joostenberg, Bakermat, Paarl, 2011, 14% [Screwcap]

Bottle £14.50 Case £165.30 Code JOO810

This, the top red here, is a Bordeaux-ish blend, with 58% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6.5% Merlot; but also 29% Syrah and 6.5% Touriga Nacional. Bakermat translates as "birth-place" or "cradle", and the wine certainly has an intriguing sense of place.

Black fruit and woodsmoke nose. All autumnal fruit - berries, damsons and rosehips - smooth, with fine tannins. A cultured New World red. Now-2018

Cape Rock, Capa Roca, Olifants River, 2014, 14%

Bottle £13.95 Case £159.03 Code CAP614

Gavin Brand at Cape Rock always admired the quality of the Portuguese varieties at his local co-operative in Olifants River, and has bought grapes for this wine, hence the name. From approximate halves of Touriga Nacional and Souzao, with a seasoning of Tinta Barocca, this is distinctive and impressive.

Black fruit aromas, with hints of mint and tar. Pure and crunchy blackcurranty fruit, peppery, with supple tannins and refreshing acidity. Hearty, and would pair well with roast pork or any rich meat dish. Now-2020

"Baked blackcurrants - not jammy, but with a syrup quality. Sweet oak on the palate, ultra-soft tannin, pleasingly pert acidic finish. There's a granitic sort of tone to it too - very Douro!", Richard Hemming MW, on jancisrobinson.com, 13th October 2016

Syrah / Shiraz

In South Africa Syrah / Shiraz has been the most newly planted grape variety for about the last 15 years. Originally the commercial driver was to replicate the success of sales of Australian Shiraz, but there's now a sense that South African examples can stand confident of their own identity between the wines of the northern Rhône and the more exuberant Australian idiom. In a gross generalisation the wines are riper and bigger than the former, and perhaps earthier and fresher than the latter. As an aside, how the wines are labelled is helpful, with Syrah usually indicating a more restrained northern Rhône style, and Shiraz a more full-on, muscular glass.

All the talk in the Cape is of whole bunch fermentation (i.e. with the stems left on the bunches, which promotes aeration) for Syrah / Shiraz. The theory is that this old-fashioned technique, often traditionally used in the Rhône (and more recently revived in Burgundy) delivers more freshness and texture and finer tannins.

Cape Heights, Shiraz, Western Cape, 2015, 14.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £6.95 Case £79.23 Code CAH615

Sophisticated winemaking to craft this juicy example: some thermo-vinification, and some whole bunch fermentation. Both of these techniques help to deliver an appealing, fruit-driven style.

This is light and pretty, all fresh raspberries and bright acidity. Very charming. Drink this year.

Goedverwacht, Great Expectations Shiraz, Robertson, 2013, 14% [Screwcap]

Bottle £8.50 Case £96.90 Code GDV613

This was a very popular wine all last year, with the fruit lightly flavoured with oak staves and softened by a bit of bottle age.

Very deep colour. Gush of cherry and raspberry, nicely perfumed, ripe, spicy and youthful but also supple. Very winning, this Shiraz would cost more if sourced from Oz. Drink this year

The Fledge, Syrah, Western Cape, 2015, 13%

Bottle £15.95 Case £181.83 Code FLE815

Look at this - a New World Syrah / Shiraz at just 13%! Leon Coetzee made just four barrels of this pure and cherry-scented Syrah (as it's definitely Northern Rhône in style), from a southish facing site on shale in Tradauw.

Vivid purple. Very pure red cherry fruit, intense and fresh, with the oak lending a light milk chocolate accent. Fine, almost delicate, and comparable to northern Rhône examples. Now-2020

"A spicy, bright, 13% alc. stunner with whiplash tannins and a heavenly seaweedy, black-fruited perfume", Matthew Jukes, **MoneyWeek**, 29th July 2016

Cederberg, Shiraz, Cederberg, 2015, 14.5%

Bottle £17.50 Case £199.50 Code CED815

This is always a well-oaked (about 60% new barrels), gorgeously fruited wine.

Strong youthful vivid purple. Scent of ripe cherries, currants and a violet note. Deliciously forward red fruits, refined and perfumed. The merest hint of pepper enlivens the finish. Lovely wine for roast beef. Now-2021

Blankbottle, Col. Mulscal Roos, Western Cape, 2013, 14%

Bottle £20.95 Case £238.83 Code BBO613

90% Shiraz and 10% Carignan from the Swartland. As Pieter Walser puts it, "the wine is not your typical new world big, oaky Shiraz. The wine is compact; red fruit, spice and rather fresh and lively with great length. It is from 4 different parcels of Shiraz... About 30% of the grapes were fermented in little open top fermenters as whole bunches. What makes this significant is that 30% of the stems were present throughout fermentation. You then get a kind of tannin that comes from it and gives a fresh cool herbaceous extreme length to the wine. So you can drink Col. MULSCAL ROOS now, but it will be best in 3 - 5 years and beyond (if you have enough self-discipline to keep it that long)".

Vivid purple. Really forward primary fruit perfume - blackcurrant. Vital and punchy, with layers of black fruit, a touch of cassis, some spice, and fresh currants on the finish. Now-2019

Blankbottle, 100.000, Voor-Paardeberg, 2015, 14.5%

Magnum £52.50 Case (6 x 150cl.) £299.25 Code BBO915

Called 100.000 as this Syrah is 100% whole bunch fermented, stems and all. Pieter Walser thought the stems were the ripest he had ever tasted in 2015, so went the whole hog. It's from an organically farmed single vineyard, and it's only been bottled in magnums as Pieter decided "the personality of the wine demanded huge bottles".

Striking purity: enticing red fruit with tangy freshness. Fine acid, very energetic and alive. Now-2021

Limited stock



Other Rhône Varieties and Blends

In the wider context of all South African vineyards there are miniscule plantings of Grenache, Cinsaut and Mourvèdre; but given the success of such varieties in Mediterranean heat there is now a realisation that these varieties can give excellent results in the Cape, especially as most are old, low-yielding bush vines giving high quality juice.

Secateurs Red, Swartland, 2013, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £11.25 Case £128.25 Code BAD613

The recipe moves around, but it's based this vintage on 83% Shiraz with 10% Grenache and 7% Cinsaut.

This has so much more suavity and perfume than most Cape reds, the Cinsaut and Grenache bringing a little freshness and grace. It offers smooth red fruit, a bit of spice and all just rounded by big old oak vats. Perfect for barbecues. The 2014 vintage will follow. Now-2018

Domaine des Dieux, Syrah-Mourvedre, Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge, 2012, 14%

Bottle £13.75 Case £156.75 Code DDD812

From about 85% Syrah and 15% Mourvèdre, this is made by Niels Verburg, a Syrah specialist who made his name at Luddite.

Attractively poised, with fresh blackberry, woodsmoke and a lick of oak. Old-fashioned, a little earthy, it needs a good chunk of meat. Now-2018

Cape Rock, Amnesty, Western Cape, 2015, 13.5% [Screwcap]

Bottle £13.95 Case £159.03 Code CAP815

Gavin Brand's take on a SGM blend - 36% Syrah, 33% Grenache, 31% Mourvèdre, given a year in old barrels. Gavin prefers minimal interference and filtration, so this may throw a deposit.

Again, a winner for the barbecue: hearty but also fresh and juicy. Soft, mildly hazy, ruby. Crushed strawberry perfume; and vivacious strawberry flavours, enlivened by pepper and spice. A charmer. Now-2018

Blankbottle, Familiemoord, Western Cape, 2015, 14%

Bottle £22.95 Case £261.63 Code BBO715

It's a long story...Pieter says it's a "wine dedicated to the interesting super ultimate misunderstanding of the South African Police thinking I killed my son...". (Familiemoord in Afrikaans = family murder. The background to this is that Pieter was mischievously covering his son with spadefuls of dirt in his back garden one day - and was reported by a neighbour to the police for infanticide. The heavies came round and Pieter had to do some explaining. The press cutting is reproduced on the label!).

From 59% Swartland Grenache, 22% Darling Cinsaut and 19% Elgin Pinot Noir, this tastes like a Cape Châteaufort-du-Pape. Extravagant Grenache aromas of cooked strawberries, and then a voluptuous but aromatic mouthful. Now-2020



Blankbottle, Koffer, Bredekloof, 2015, 14.5%

Bottle £22.95 Case £261.63 Code BBO815

100% Cinsaut - the bunches carefully hand-picked and then hand-sorted, eliminating less than perfect berries. As Pieter notes, the individual Cinsaut grapes can be huge, so the grape gives a pale coloured wine.

All red fruit. Strawberryish nose, and pretty red berry and red cherry flavours. But lots of other things going on too: juicy flesh, bright acid and a mildly dusty hint which adds interest. Now-2018

Badenhorst, Family Red, Swartland, 2014, 13%

Bottle £23.50 Case £267.90 Code BAD814

The blend varies from vintage to vintage but this is always based on Syrah: 56% this vintage, plus 17% of each of Grenache and Cinsaut and 10% Tinta Barocca, given a very long post-fermentation maceration.

Crafted for perfume, suavity and longevity rather than power - note the moderate alcohol - this is always rather Northern Rhône in style. Offering complex flavours of blackberry and black cherry with liquorice and black pepper, this has a proper, if svelte, structure, and will reward keeping (though it's great now too!) Now-2022

Pinot Noir

We used to be wary of Cape Pinot: as with old-fashioned Australian Pinot Noir so much used to be made from poor plant material, grown in sites which were too hot. The result, all too often, was stewed and lacking Pinot's aromatics and grace. However, a lot has changed, and whilst the Hemel-en-Aarde Valley near Hermanus has claimed most of the plaudits, there's also now fine Pinot made from higher sites or in cool coastal vineyards.

Fryer's Cove, Pinot Noir, Western Cape, 2014, 13%

Bottle £13.95 Case £159.03 Code FRY614

This cool-climate Pinot comes from a remarkable coastal vineyard (see page 4) with a little bought in fruit, hence Western Cape on the label.

This is always an attractively fast-maturing Pinot, so already one enjoys those pleasing savoury and undergrowth hints of, say, a seven year old wine from the Côte de Beaune. Soft, quite pale ruby tone. Aromas of red cherries with mocha oak. Supple, strawberry and raspberry scented wine, aromatic, and lightly spicy. Very honest expression of Pinot Noir. Now-2018

The Fledge, Katvis Pinot Noir, 2015, 14%

Bottle £14.95 Case £170.43 Code FLE615

Named after the catfish which lurk in Cape dams (rainwater saved for irrigation), this Pinot is a blend of fruit sourced from Elgin (37.5%), Tradouw (37.5%) and Klein Karoo (25%).

Mid purple. Delicious strawberry, raspberry and black cherry flavours, intense, with bright Pinot acidity and lovely aromatics. Pinot of some power, with keeping potential too. Now-2019

"...a vitally refreshing and intensely rewarding wine, stuffed with wild cherries and parading flair and daring in every molecule", Matthew Jukes, **MoneyWeek**, July 29th, 2016.

Limited stock

Domaine des Dieux, Josephine Pinot Noir, Hemel-en-Aarde Ridge, 2012, 13%

Bottle £15.50 Case £176.70 Code DDD612

The Hemel-en-Aarde valley has long been famous for high quality for fine Pinot Noir, notably Hamilton Russell and Bouchard Finlayson, with farms in the lower part of the valley. Plantings at the top of the valley, now separately named as "Ridge" - higher, drier, with warmer days but cooler nights - have increased over the last 15 years.

From 9 year old vines. A portion is whole bunch fermented, then into French oak, 40% new. Pale hue. Gentle strawberry scent. This is elegant for a New World Pinot, showing soft red fruit with savoury notes. Now-2018

"Domaine des Dieux deserves to be considered among the best Hemel en Aarde Pinot Noir producers, making wines of delicacy and finesse. Light, floral and juicy with a dusting of new oak and sweet summer berry flavours. Drink: 2015-19. 91/100", Tim Atkin, South Africa Special Report, 2015.

Chamonix, Pinot Noir Reserve, Franschhoek, 2014, 13.5%

Bottle £21.95 Case £250.23 Code CHX314

The Reserve Pinot Noir is from the higher vineyards, at 500-600 metres of altitude and facing south-south west, so cooler. Fermented with a proportion of the stalks in open top concrete fermenters, as in Burgundy, and then into Allier oak, 60% new. This was the last vintage wholly overseen by Gottfried Mocke and he really went out on a cracker, recognized by **Decanter** magazine - see below - as one of the 75 "most exciting wines of 2016".

Red fruits - almost fresh strawberry - with coffee and hint of mint on the nose; and then a much more intense, beautifully ripe attack of strawberry, raspberry and blackberry. All perfectly in balance, this is silky and delicious. Now-2021

"A lighter style of Pinot, with classic ripe plum and sweet strawberry fruit but also a hint of vegetal allure. Excellent purity of crunchy fruit flavours and finishing with a savoury touch from well-integrated oak. A fantastic food wine. Drink 2017-2022", **Decanter**, January 2017

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