

Op Die Berg Chardonnay 2017



VINTAGE

High on the Witzenberg Mountain range in Ceres, at an altitude of 960 meters above sea level, this unique 'appellation' exhibits South Africa's only truly continental climate with winter temperatures frequently dropping below freezing. The daily temperature fluctuation at altitude, with cooler night time temperatures and hotter daytime temperatures during the growing season, results in slower ripening, and more concentrated fruit – especially during growing season of 2017, with the colder than usual night time temperatures resulting in the Ceres fruit showing surprisingly cooler climate characteristics in comparison to other regions of the Western Cape. All indications point to an excellent vintage.

VINEYARDS

The family farm, better known in yesteryear for its high quality apples and pears, supports well drained, soft yellow shale soils, which in conjunction with the altitude and continental climate, provide ideal growing conditions for high quality, concentrated Chardonnay grapes, with characteristics unique the appellation.

VINIFICATION

Handpicked at the break of dawn, carefully selected grapes are de-stemmed, crushed and lightly pressed at De Grendel with a recovery of only 650 litres per ton. After overnight settling, the juice is inoculated and transferred 2 days later to 225 litre French oak barrels for fermentation, of which 33% are new, 33% are 2nd fill and 33% are 3rd fill. The wine is barrel aged 'sur lie', on the fine lees, for 6 months undergoing 'batonage', where the lees are stirred up into the wine twice a week before malolactic fermentation begins, and once a month after malolactic fermentation has completed, for the purposes of enhancing mouth feel and structure of the wine.

TASTING NOTES

Pale golden straw in colour, the nose reveals comforting nuances of butterscotch, cocoanut and vanilla aptly underscored by delicate white pear aromas and hints of star fruit before a soft entry unfurls enticing layers of creamy white peach and apricot flavours on the palate complimented by a creamy vanilla finish that lingers with a flourish of saline minerality.

ANALYSIS

Residual Sugar:	1.9 g/l
pH:	3.23
Total Acidity:	6.3 g/l
Alcohol:	13%

FOOD COMPLIMENTS

A definitive food wine that pairs exceptionally well with fish and poultry, particularly if served with cream based sauces – the wine really comes into its own with a meal. Mild, nutty chesses such as Gouda would work wonders as well.

AGEING POTENTIAL

The creamy pear and star fruit flavours of the younger wine will potentially evolve into richer lemon cream pie flavours as the oaking and fruit integrate with age for the next 4 to 5 years.