



- **Country:** South Africa
- **Region:** Coastal Region
- **Subregion:** Stellenbosch
- **Vintage:** 2020
- **Colour:** Red
- **Grape Variety:** Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot
- **ABV:** 14%
- **Bottle Size:** 75cl
- **Closure:** Screwcap
- **Style:** Old and new
- **Drink With:** Hotpot

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RUSTENBERG RM NICHOLSON

<https://gerrardseel.co.uk/products/rustenberg-rm-nicholson>

Rustenberg RM Nicholson has blackcurrant aromas complemented by scents of dried herbs and notes of black pepper and spice, followed by a palate with serious structure from the Bordeaux varieties and finishing off with softness from the Shiraz.

RM Nicholson is named after a former charismatic owner-winemaker, Reginald "Reg" Merriman Nicholson, who lived and worked on the farm for 30 years and was the creator of Rustenberg's famous "Dry Red" blend. Just as the Dry Red was an unconventional blend, the RM Nicholson is a new world style blend of classic varieties that would typically not be combined. The result is a blend of Bordeaux and Rhône grape varieties aiming to express the typicity of each vintage, unrestrained by convention to create great wine. We recommend decanting this wine before serving.

ABOUT THE GROWER

The Rustenberg Estate stands on an impressive 880 hectares against the iconic Simonsberg Mountain in Stellenbosch, with a glimpse of Table Mountain in the distance. Of the 880 hectares, 110 hectares are under vine (with plans to plant more), 200 hectares make up the beautiful pastures and farmland for grazing cattle, a portion hosts the historical farm and winery buildings, and the rest of Rustenberg is comprised of conservation land, made up of natural "fynbos" (the indigenous flora of the Cape) and a myriad of wildlife including porcupines, caracals, and cape leopard.

Rustenberg has a wine-growing history dating back to 1682, when Roelof Pasman recognised its vine-growing potential. By 1781, some 3000 cases of wine were produced on the farm each year. Production doubled by the end of the century and a new cellar was built, where wine has been bottled for an unbroken period since 1892.

In the early 1800s, Rustenberg was divided by the then owner Jacob Eksteen and a section was given to his son-in-law, who named it Schoongezicht and sold it soon after. Investment and development at Rustenberg and Schoongezicht hit a peak around 1812, resulting in beautiful homesteads and flourishing vineyards. But, by the middle of the century, recession coupled with vine disease brought bankruptcy and dispossession.

Schoongezicht was rescued in 1892 by future prime minister John X. Merriman, and Rustenberg by his brother-in-law Sir Jacob Barry. Together, they revitalised the estates. Fruit was sent to Covent Garden; new vines were grafted onto disease-resistant American rootstock; wines were exported to England and continental Europe, even as far afield as Siberia.

In 1941 Peter and Pamela Barlow bought Rustenberg, later acquiring Schoongezicht and reuniting the properties. Peter lovingly restored many of the old buildings on the property and developed the farming capacity of the estate by building dams and renovating the winery.

Their son, Simon, took over the running of the farm in 1987, having run Nooitgedacht, a property on the foothills of the Helderberg Mountain in Stellenbosch for a number of years. Simon reinvigorated the property as South Africa emerged from post-Apartheid isolation. He built a new winery and imported modern virus free clones and grape varieties to replant the estate's vineyards. Simon is actively involved in the everyday running of the farm, along with his wife Rozanne who is responsible for the grounds and gardens.

Simon and Rozanne's son, Murray, farms full time with his parents, having returned from completing his Masters in Oenology from The University of Adelaide in Australia in 2012. Murray has brought a renewed passion and a modern outlook to the operation, and he is primarily involved in the winemaking and marketing on the property.

The Barlows have now been at Rustenberg for over 70 years, the longest period that any one family has owned the estate.