

The Pienneef COLLECTION

2018 PIERNEEF SYRAH VIOGNIER



ORIGIN

This wine is a blend of 98% Syrah and 2% Viognier. The Syrah component is from Elim (50%), Walker Bay (30%) and Napier (20%), while the Viognier (2%) originates from Franschhoek.

VINTAGE

The dry conditions during the preceding two seasons continued and caused the harvest to be 15% smaller than that of 2017. The preceding winter was cold enough to allow adequate dormancy, but started late. This delayed budding and, eventually, harvesting started approximately two weeks later than in 2017. Dry and windy conditions once again allowed the grapes to stay healthy, while cool conditions promoted flavour retention. In some areas damage was caused by frost. Production in Elim was much lower as a result of hail damage in November.

VITICULTURE

The Elim vineyards grow in duplex soils with a high content of ferrocrete (coffee stone), the Walker Bay vineyards in shallow shale, and the Franschhoek vineyards in deep, sandy, decomposed sandstone and granite. Cool conditions in the Elim area resulted in a naturally low yield of about 5 tons/ha. The Walker Bay vineyards also produced a low yield because of dry, windy conditions and the shallow shale soils. The Franschhoek Viognier was chosen because of its late ripening and was harvested together with the Syrah in order to co-ferment.

VINICULTURE

Grapes from the different Syrah vineyards were harvested at different times, but always together with an amount of Viognier. The

grapes were hand-sorted and then fermented without stems. Regular pump-overs were done during fermentation at about 25 degrees Celsius. After about 15 days' maceration the free run and press wine were transferred together to 300 litre barrels and matured for 14 months. 50% of the barrels were new. Bottling was in November 2019 and 16 000 cases (6 x 750 ml) and 500 magnums were produced.

ANALYSIS

Alcohol	12,81% vol
Residual sugar	2,6 g/l
Total acid	5,9 g/l
pH	3,41

CELLARMASTER'S IMPRESSIONS

For the first time, Napier grapes were used in this blend. Syrah from Napier has the same spicy and perfumy characteristics as Elim Syrah. The wine shows intense red flower perfume, with aniseed spice. Mulberry fruit and savoury leather complement the complex nose. The palate is characteristic of a typical cool climate, with medium body, and fine tannins adding a lively presence. Green peppercorn spice on the palate contributes to a lengthy finish.

CONNOISSEUR'S CHOICE

This red-and-white blend with its rich, fruity style is a versatile partner to food. The structure and spice of the Syrah as well as the floral nuances of the Viognier allow it to complement beef, venison and charcuterie, aromatic curries, game birds such as quail and duck, as well as reduced fruit flavours.